

*John Morice.*



*John Morice.*



THE

SHAKESPEARE

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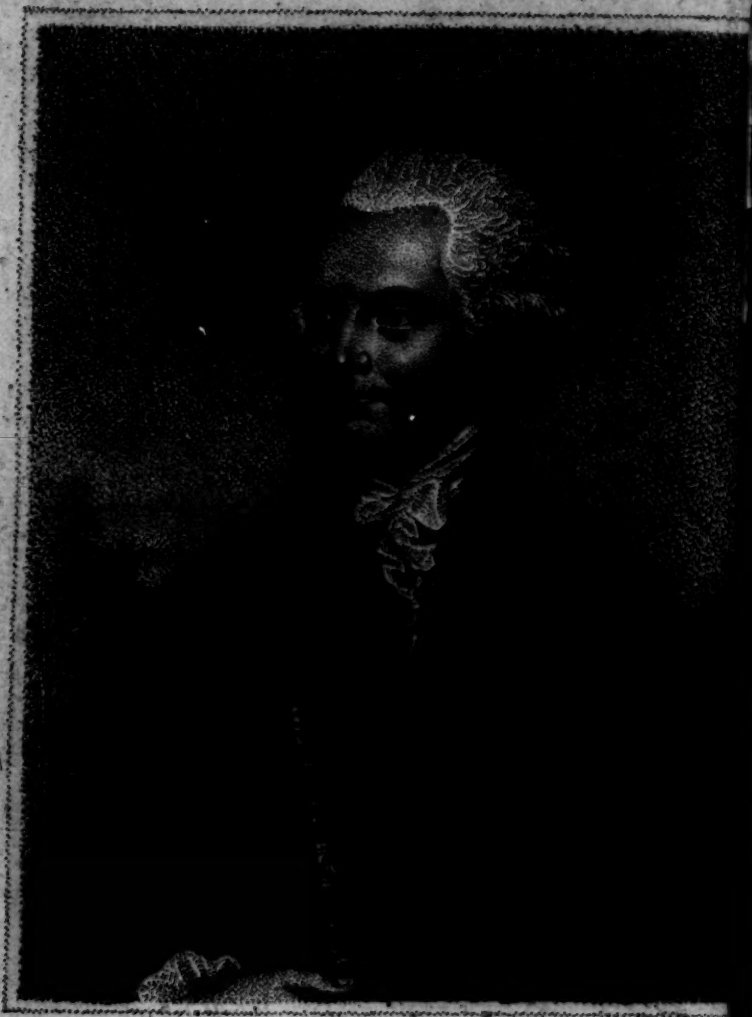
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**Bell's Edition**

**OF**

**SHAKSPERE.**

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E. MALONE ESQ<sup>r</sup>.

*Engraved by Bartolozzi from a Picture painted by Sir Jos.<sup>th</sup> Reynolds.*

London Printed for J. Bell British Library Strand May 16<sup>th</sup> 1787.

PROLEGOMENA  
TO THE  
DRAMATICK WRITINGS  
OF  
WILL. SHAKSPERE.

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Volume the Second.

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—SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

VIRG.

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LONDON:

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M DCC LXXXVIII.

PROLOGOMENA

TO THE

BRITISH MUSEUM

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THE  
BRITISH MUSEUM  
LONDON  
1847



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**AN ATTEMPT**  
**TO ASCERTAIN**  
**THE ORDER**

**IN WHICH**  
**The PLAYS attributed to SHAKSPERE**  
**WERE WRITTEN.**

——— *Primusque per avia campi*  
*Usque procul (necdum totas lux moverat umbras),*  
*Nescio quid visu dubium, incertumque moveri,*  
*Corporaque ire videt.* **STATIUS.**

*Trattando l'ombre come cosa saldo.* **DANTE.**

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**E**VERY circumstance that relates to those persons whose writings we admire, interests our curiosity. The time and place of their birth, their education and gradual attainments, the dates of their productions, and the reception they severally met with, their habits of life, their private friendships, and even their external form, are all points, which, how little soever they

they may have been adverted to by their contemporaries, strongly engage the attention of posterity. Not satisfied with receiving the aggregated wisdom of ages as a free gift, we visit the mansions where our instructors are said to have resided, we contemplate with pleasure the trees under whose shade they once reposed, and wish to see and to converse with those sages, whose labours have added strength to virtue, and efficacy to truth.

Shakspeare, above all writers, since the days of Homer, has excited this curiosity in the highest degree; as, perhaps, no poet of any nation was ever more idolized by his countrymen. An ardent desire to understand and explain his works, has, to the honour of the present age, so much increased within these last thirty years, that more has been done towards their elucidation, during that period\*, than, perhaps, in a century before. All the ancient copies of his plays, hitherto discovered, have been collated with the most scrupulous accuracy. The meanest books have been carefully examined, only because they were of the age in which he lived, and might, happily, throw a light on some forgotten custom, or obsolete phraseology: and, this object being still kept in view, the toil of wading through *all such reading as was never read*, has been cheerfully endured, because

\* Within the period here mentioned, the commentaries of Warburton, Edwards, Heath, Johnson, Tyrwhitt, Farmer, and Steevens, have been published.

no labour was thought too great, that might enable us to add one new laurel to the father of our drama. Almost every circumstance that tradition or history has preserved, relative to him or his works, has been investigated, and laid before the publick; and the avidity with which all communications of this kind have been received, sufficiently proves, that the time expended in the pursuit has not been wholly mis-employed.

However, after the most diligent inquiries, very few particulars have been recovered, respecting his private life, or literary history: and while it has been the endeavour of all his editors and commentators, to illustrate his obscurities, and to regulate and correct his text, no attempt has been made to trace the progress and order of his plays. Yet, surely, it is no incurious speculation, to mark the gradations \* by which

\* It is not pretended, that a regular scale of gradual improvement is here presented to the publick; or that, if even Shakspeare himself had left us a chronological list of his dramas, it would exhibit such a scale. All that is meant is, that, as his knowledge increased, and as he became more conversant with the stage and with life, his performances, *in general*, were written more happily, and with greater art; or (to use the words of Dr. Johnson), "*that, however favoured by nature, he could only impart what he had learned, and as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition; he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better as he knew it more, and*

*instruct*

which he rose from mediocrity to the summit of excellence ; from artless and uninteresting dialogues, to those unparalleled compositions, which have rendered him the delight and wonder of successive ages.

The

*instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed."* Of this opinion also was Mr. Pope. "*It must be observed (says he), that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had succeeded to that of the town, the works of his riper years are manifestly raised above those of his former.— And I make no doubt that this observation would be found true in every instance, were but editions extant from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was composed, and whether writ for the town or the court.*" From the following lines it appears, that Dryden also thought that our author's most imperfect plays were his earliest dramattick compositions :

" Your Ben and Fletcher, in their first young flight,

" Did no *Valpone*, no *Arbaces* write ;

" But hopp'd about, and short excursions made

" From bough to bough, as if they were afraid ;

" And each were guilty of some *Slighted Maid*.

" Shakspeare's own muse his *Pericles* first bore,

" *The Prince of Tyre* was elder than *The Moor*.

" 'Tis miracle to see a first good play ;

" All hawthorns do not bloom on Christmas-day.

" A slender poet must have time to grow,

" And spread and burnish as his brothers do :

" Who

The materials for ascertaining the order in which his plays were written, are indeed so few, that, it is to be feared, nothing very decisive can be produced on this subject. In the following attempt to trace the progress of his dramattick art, probability alone is pretended to. The silence and inaccuracy of those persons, who, after his death, had the revisal of his papers, will, perhaps, for ever prevent our attaining

“ Who still looks lean, sure with some p— is curst,

“ But no man can be *Falstaff* fat at first.”

Prologue to the tragedy of *Circe*.

The plays which Shakspeare produced before the year 1600, are known, and are about eighteen in number. The rest of his dramas, we may conclude, were composed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country. It is incumbent on those, who differ in opinion from the great authorities above-mentioned, who think with Rowe, that “ *we are not to look for his beginning in his least perfect works,*” it is incumbent, I say, on those persons, to enumerate in the former class, that is, among the plays produced before 1600, compositions of equal merit with *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*, which we have reason to believe were all written in the latter period; and among his late performances, that is, among the plays which are supposed to have appeared after the year 1600, to point out five pieces, as hasty, indigested, and uninteresting, as *the first and third parts of K. Henry VI.* *Love's Labour Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which, we know, were among his earlier works.



to any thing like proof on this head. Little then remains, but to collect into one view, from his several dramas, and from the ancient tracts in which they are mentioned, or alluded to, all the circumstances that can throw any light on this new and curious inquiry. From these circumstances, and from the entries in the books of the Stationers-Company, extracted and now first published by Mr. Steevens (to whom every admirer of Shakspeare has the highest obligations), it is probable, that the plays attributed to our author were written nearly in the following succession; which, though it cannot at this day be ascertained to be their true order, may yet be considered as approaching nearer to it, than any which has been observed in the various editions of his works. The *rejected* pieces are here enumerated with the rest, but no opinion is thereby meant to be given concerning their authenticity.

Of the nineteen genuine plays which were not printed in our author's life-time\*, the majority were, I believe,

\* They are, *King Henry VI. Part I. The Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Winter's Tale, The Comedy of Errors, King John, All's Well that Ends Well, As You Like It, King Henry VIII. Measure for Measure, Cymbeline, Macbeth, The Taming of the Shrew, Julius Cæsar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens, Othello, The Tempest, and Twelfth-Night.* Of these nineteen plays, four, viz. *The First Part of K. Henry VI. King John, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and The Comedy of Errors,* were certainly early compositions, and are an exception to the general truth of this observation: Perhaps, the ill success of the two latter, was the occasion that



lieve, late compositions\*. The following arrangement is in some measure formed on this idea. Two reasons may be assigned, why Shakspeare's late performances were not published till after his death.

1. If we suppose him to have written for the stage during a period of twenty years, those pieces which were produced in the latter part of that period, were less likely to pass through the press in his life-time, as the curiosity of the publick had not been so long engaged by them, as by his early compositions. 2.

From the time that Shakspeare had the superintendence that they were not printed so soon as his other early performances. Two others, viz. *The Winter's Tale*, and *All's Well that Ends Well*, though supposed to have been early productions, were, it must be acknowledged, not published in Shakspeare's life-time; but for the dates of these we rely only on conjecture.

\* This supposition is strongly confirmed by Meres's list of our author's plays, in 1598. From that list, and from other circumstances, we learn, that of the sixteen genuine plays which were printed in Shakspeare's life-time, thirteen were written before the end of the year 1600.—The sixteen plays published in our author's life-time, are — *Love's Labour Lost*. *The Second and Third Parts of K. Henry VI.* *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *K. Richard II.* *K. Richard III.* *The First Part of K. Henry IV.* *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* *K. Henry V.* *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *K. Lear*.

of a playhouse, that is, from the year 1603\*, when he and several others obtained a licence from King James to exhibit comedies, tragedies, histories, &c. at the Globe-Theatre, and elsewhere, it became strongly his interest to preserve those pieces unpublished, which were composed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country; manuscript plays being then the great support of every theatre. Nor were the plays which he wrote after he became a manager, so likely to get abroad, being confined to his own theatre, as his former productions, which probably had been acted on many different stages, and of consequence afforded the players at the several houses, where they were exhibited, an easy opportunity of making out copies from the separate parts transcribed for their use, and of selling such copies to

\* None of the plays which in the ensuing list are supposed to have been written subsequently to this year, were printed till after the author's death, except *K. Lear*, the publication of which was probably hastened by that of the old play with the same title, in 1605.—The copy of *Troilus and Cressida*, which seems to have been composed the year before K. James granted a licence to the company at the Globe-Theatre, appears to have been obtained by some uncommon artifice. "Thank fortune (says the Editor) for the *scape* it hath made amongst you; since, by the grand possessors' wills, I believe, you should have pray'd for them, rather than been pray'd."—By the *grand possessors*, Shakspeare and the other managers of the Globe-Theatre, were clearly intended.

Printers ;

Printers; by which means, there is great reason to believe, that they were submitted to the press, without the consent of the author.

1. <i>Titus Andronicus</i>	1589
2. <i>LOVE'S LABOUR LOST</i>	1591
3. <i>FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.</i>	1591
4. <i>SECOND PART OF KING HENRY VI.</i>	1592
5. <i>THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.</i>	1592
6. <i>THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA</i>	1593
7. <i>THE WINTER'S TALE</i>	1594
8. <i>A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM</i>	1595
9. <i>ROMEO AND JULIET</i>	1595
10. <i>THE COMEDY OF ERRORS</i>	1596
11. <i>HAMLET</i>	1596
12. <i>KING JOHN</i>	1596
13. <i>KING RICHARD II.</i>	1597
14. <i>KING RICHARD III.</i>	1597
15. <i>FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV.</i>	1597
16. <i>THE MERCHANT OF VENICE</i>	1598
17. <i>ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL</i>	1598
18. <i>SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV.</i>	1598
19. <i>KING HENRY V.</i>	1599
20. <i>MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING,</i>	1600
21. <i>AS YOU LIKE IT.</i>	1600
22. <i>MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR</i>	1601
23. <i>KING HENRY VIII.</i>	1601
24. <i>TROILUS AND CRESSIDA</i>	1602
25. <i>MEASURE FOR MEASURE</i>	1603
Cc iij	26. <i>CYMBELINE</i>

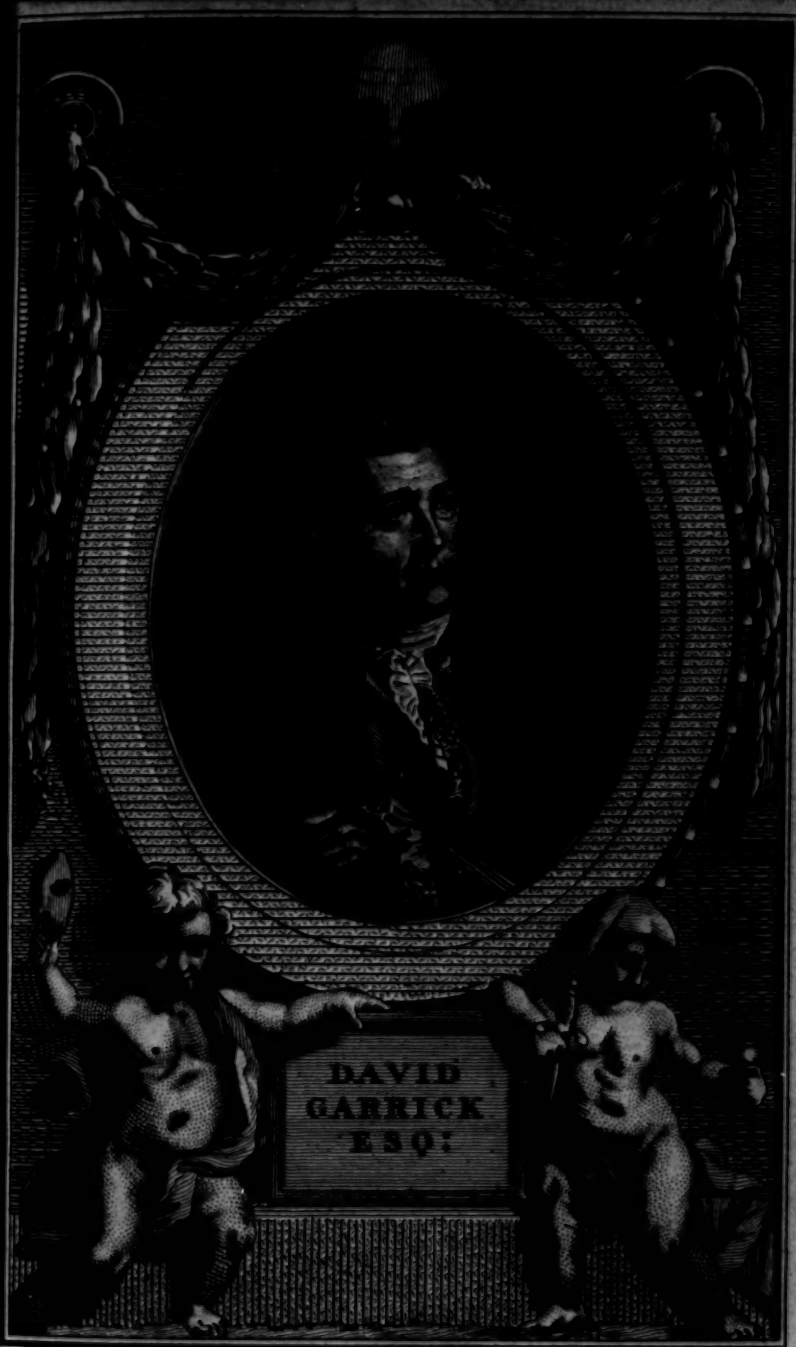
26. CYMBELINE	_____	_____	1604
27. KING LEAR	_____	_____	1605
28. MACBETH	_____	_____	1606
29. THE TAMING OF THE SHREW	_____	_____	1606
30. JULIUS CÆSAR	_____	_____	1607
31. ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA	_____	_____	1608
32. CORIOLANUS	_____	_____	1609
33. TIMON OF ATHENS	_____	_____	1610
34. OTHELLO,	_____	_____	1611
35. THE TEMPEST	_____	_____	1612
36. TWELFTH NIGHT	_____	_____	1614

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### 1. *TITUS ANDRONICUS*, 1589.

In what year our author began to write for the stage, or which was his first performance, has not been hitherto ascertained. And indeed, we have so few lights to direct our inquiries, that any speculation on this subject may appear an idle expence of time. But the method which has been already marked out, requires that such facts should be mentioned as may serve in any manner to elucidate these points.

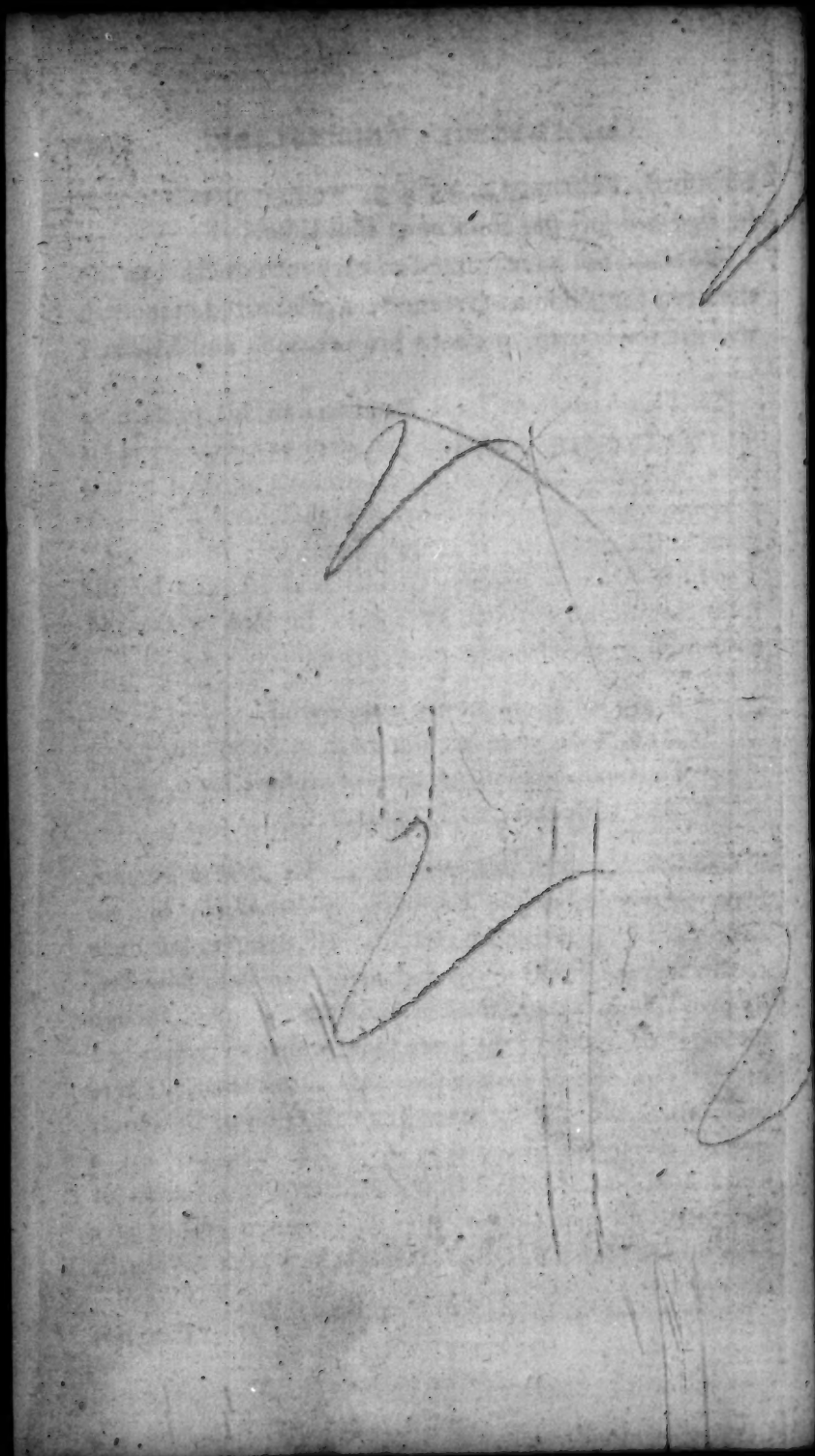
Shakspere was born on the 23d of April 1564, and was probably married in, or before, September 1582, his eldest daughter, Susannah, having been baptized on the 26th of May 1583. At what time he left Warwickshire, or was first employed in the play-house, tradition does not inform us. However, as his son Samuel, and his daughter Judith, were baptized at  
Stratford,



*A. Dance pin.*

*Grav. J. J. J.*

*Done from an original Picture in the possession of  
the R.<sup>t</sup> Hon.<sup>ble</sup> Lord Mansfield.*





Stratford, February 2, 1584-5, we may presume that he had not left the country at that time.

He could not have wanted an easy introduction to the theatre; for Thomas Greene \*, a celebrated comedian was his townsman, perhaps his relation, and Michael

\* "There was not (says Heywood in his preface to *Greene's Tu quoque*, a comedy) an actor of his nature in his time, of better ability in the performance of what he undertook, more applauded by the audience, of greater grace at the court, or of more general love in the city." The birth-place of Thomas Greene is ascertained by the following lines, which he speaks in one of the old comedies, in the character of a clown :

" I prattled poesie in my nurse's arms,

" And, born were late our swan of Avon sung;

" In Avon's streams we both of us have lav'd,

" And both came out together."

Chetwood quotes this passage, in his *British Theatre*, from the comedy of the *Two Maids of Moreclack*; but no such passage is there to be found. He deserves but little credit, having certainly forged many of his dates; however, he probably met these lines in some ancient play, though he forgot the name of the piece from which he transcribed them. Greene was a writer as well as an actor. There are some verses of his prefixed to a collection of Drayton's poems, published in the year 1613. He was, perhaps, a kinsman of Shakspeare's. In the register of the parish of Stratford, Thomas Greene, alias Shakspeare, is said to have been buried March 6, 1589. He might have been the actor's father.

Drayton

Drayton was likewise born in Warwickshire; the latter was nearly of his own age; and both were in some degree of reputation soon after the year 1590. If I were to indulge a conjecture, I should name the middle of the year 1591, as the æra when our author commenced a writer for the stage; at which time he was somewhat more than twenty-seven years old. The reasons that induce me to fix on that period are these. In Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetry*, published in 1586, we meet with the names of most of the celebrated poets of that time; particularly those of George Whetstone\* and Antony Munday†, who were

\* The author of *Promos and Cassandra*, a play which furnished Shakspeare with the fable of *Measure for Measure*.

† This poet is mentioned by Meres, in his *Wit's Treasury*, as an eminent comick writer, and the best plotter of his time. He seems to have been introduced under the name of Don Antonio Balladino, in a comedy that has been attributed to Ben Jonson, called *The Case is Altered*; and from the following passages in that piece appears to have been city-poet; whose business it was to compose an annual panegyrick on the Lord-Mayor, and to write verses for the pageants: an office which has been discontinued since the death of Elkanah Settle in 1722:

*Onion.* "Shall I request your name?"

*Ant.* My name is Antonio Balladino.

*Oni.* Balladino! You are not pageant-poet to the city of Milan, Sir, are you?

*Ant.*

were *dramatick* writers; but we find no trace of our author, or of any of his works. Three years afterwards, Puttenham printed his *Art of English Poesy*; and in that work also we look in vain for the name of Shakspeare\*. Sir John Harrington in his *Apologie for Poetry*,

*Ant.* I supply the place, Sir, when a worse cannot be had, Sir. — Did you see the last pageant I set forth?"

Afterwards Antonio, speaking of the plays he had writtten, says,

"Let me have good ground—no matter for the pen; the plot shall carry it.

*Oni.* Indeed that's right; you are in print, already, for THE BEST PLOTTER.

*Ant.* Ay; I might as well have been put in for a dumb shew too."

It is evident, that this poet is here intended to be ridiculed by Ben Jonson; but he might, notwithstanding, have been deservedly eminent. That malignity, which endeavoured to tear a wreath from the brow of Shakspeare, would certainly not spare inferior writers.

\*The thirty-first chapter of the first book of Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* is thus entitled: "Who in any age have bene the most commended writers in our English Poesie, and the author's censure given upon them."

After having enumerated several authors who were then celebrated for various kinds of composition, he gives this succinct account of those who had written for the stage:

"Of the latter sort I thinke thus;—that for tragedie, the Lord Buckhurst

*Poetry*, prefixed to the *Translation of Ariosto* (which was entered in the Stationers' books, February 26, 1590-1, in which year, it was printed), takes occasion to speak of the theatre, and mentions some of the celebrated dramas of that time; but says not a word of Shakspeare, of any of his plays. If even *Love's Labour Lost* had then appeared, which was probably his first dramatick composition, is it imaginable, that Harrington should have mentioned the Cambridge *Pedantius*, and *The Play of the Cards* (which last, he tells us was a London comedy), and have passed by, unnoticed, the new prodigy of the dramatick world.

That Shakspeare had commenced a writer for the stage and had even excited the jealousy of his contemporaries, before September 1592, is now decisively proved by a passage \* extracted by Mr. Tyrwhitt from Robert

*Buckhurst and Maister Edward Ferrys, for such doings as I have sene of theirs, do deserve the hyest price; the Earl of Oxford and Maister Edwardes of her Majestie's Chappell, for comedie and enterlude."*

\* See Vol. VI. p. ult. where the passage is given at large. The paragraph which immediately follows that quoted by Mr. Tyrwhitt, though obscure, is worth transcribing, as it seems to allude to Shakspeare's country education, and to intimate, that he had not removed to London long before the year 1592.—After having mentioned a person who had newly appeared in the double capacity of actor and author, "one who is in his owne conceit the only  
Shak-

Robert Greene's *Groatsworth of Witte bought with a Million of Repentance*\*, in which there is an evident allusion to our author's name, as well as to one of his plays.

At what time soever he became acquainted with the theatre, we may presume that he had not composed his first play *long before it was acted*; for being early incumbered with a young family, and not in very affluent circumstances, it is improbable that he should have suffered it to lie in his closet, without endeavouring to derive some profit from it; and in the miserable state of the drama in those days, the meanest of his genuine plays must have been a valuable acquisition, and would hardly have been *refused* by any of the managers of our ancient theatres.

*Titus Andronicus* appears to have been *acted* before any other play attributed to Shakspeare; and therefore, as

Shake-scene in a country," and exhorted his brother poets to seek *better maisters* than the players, Greene proceeds thus: *In this I might insert two more, that both have written against these buckram gentlemen [the players:] but let their owne worke serve to witnesse against their own wickednesse, if they persever to maintaine any more such peasants. For other new-commers, I leave them to the mercie of these painted monsters, who, I doubt not, will drive the best-minded to despise them, &c.*" Greene's *Groatsworth of Witte*, &c. Sig. E. 4.

\* This tract has no date, but was published after the author's death, agreeably to his dying request. It appears to have



as it has been admitted into all the editions of his works, whoever might have been the writer of it, it is entitled to the first place in this general list of his dramas. From Ben Jonson's induction to *Bartholomew-Fair*, 1614, we learn that *Andronicus* had been exhibited twenty-five or thirty years before, that is, at the lowest computation, in 1589: or, taking a middle period (which is perhaps more just), in 1587. In our author's dedication of his *Venus and Adonis* to lord Southampton, in 1593, he tells us, as Mr. Steevens has observed, that that poem was "*the first heir of his invention*:" and if we were sure that it was published immediately, or soon, after it was written, it would at once prove *Titus Andronicus* not to be the production of Shakspeare, and nearly ascertain the time when he commenced a dramattick writer. But we do not know what interval might have elapsed between the composition and the publication of that poem. There is, indeed, a passage in the dedication already mentioned, which, if there were not such decisive evidence on the other side, might induce us to think that he had not written, in 1593, any piece of more dignity than a love-poem, or at least any on which he

have been written not long before his death; for near the conclusion he says, "*Albeit weakness will scarce suffer me to write, yet to my fellow schollers about this citie will I direct these few insuing lines.*" He died, according to Dr. Gabriel Harvey's account, on the third of September 1592. *Additions by Oldys to Winstanley's Lives of the Poets*, MS.

himself



himself set a value. "If, says he to his noble patron, your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some *graver* labour."

"A booke, entitled a *Noble Roman History of Titus Andronicus*," (without any author's name) was entered at Stationers-Hall, February 9, 1593-4. This I suppose to have been the play, as it was printed in that year, and acted (according to Langbaine, who alone appears to have seen the first edition) by the servants of the earls of Pembroke, Derby, and Essex.

Mr. Pope thought that *Titus Andronicus* was not written by Shakspeare, because Ben Jonson spoke slightly of it while Shakspeare was yet living. This argument will not, perhaps, bear a very strict examination. If it were allowed to have any validity, many of our author's genuine productions must be excluded from his works: for Ben Jonson has ridiculed several of his dramas, in the same piece in which he has mentioned *Andronicus* with contempt.

It has been said that Francis Meres, who in 1598 enumerated this among our author's plays, might have been misled by a title-page; but we may presume that he was informed or deceived by some other means; for Shakspeare's name is *not* in the title-page of the edition printed in 1611, and therefore, we may conclude, was not in the title-page of that in 1594, of which the other was probably a re-impression.

However (notwithstanding the authority of Meres), the high antiquity of the piece, its entry on the Sta-

tioners' books without the name of the writer, the regularity of the versification, the dissimilitude of the style from that of those plays which are undoubtedly composed by our author, and the tradition mentioned by Ravenscroft \*, at a period when some of his contemporaries had not been long dead †, render it highly improbable that this play should have been the composition of Shakspeare.

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## 2. LOVE'S LABOUR LOST, 1591.

Shakspeare's natural disposition leading him, as Dr. Johnson has observed, to comedy, it is highly probable that his first dramattick production was of the comick kind; and of his comedies none appears to me to bear stronger marks of a first essay than *Love's Labour*,

\*“ I have been told, by some anciently conversant with the stage, that it [*Titus Andronicus*] was not originally his, but brought by a private author to be acted, and he only gave some master touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters.” Ravenscroft's preface to *Titus Andronicus*, altered by him.

† John Lowin, and Joseph Taylor, two of the actors in Shakspeare's plays, were alive a few years before the Restoration of King Charles II. and Sir William D'Avenant, who had himself written for the stage in 1629 (thirteen years after the death of our author), did not die till April 1668. Ravenscroft's alteration of *Titus Andronicus*, was published in 1687.

*Lost.*

*Lost.* The frequent rhymes with which it abounds\*, of which, in his early performances, he seems to have been extremely fond, its imperfect versification, its artless and desultory dialogue, and the irregularity of the composition, may be all urged in support of this conjecture.

*Love's*

\* As this circumstance is more than once mentioned in the course of these observations, it may not be improper to add a few words on the subject of our author's metre. A mixture of rhymes with blank verse, in the same play, and sometimes in the same scene, is found in almost all his pieces, and is not peculiar to Shakspeare, being also found in the works of Jonson, and almost all our ancient dramattick writers. It is not, therefore, merely the use of rhymes, mingled with blank verse, but their *frequency*, that is here urged as a circumstance which seems to characterize and distinguish our poet's earliest performances. In the whole number of pieces which were written, antecedent to the year 1600, and which, for the sake of perspicuity, have been called his *early compositions*, more rhyming couplets are found than in all the plays composed subsequently to that year; which have been named his *late productions*. Whether in process of time Shakspeare grew weary of the bondage of rhyme, or whether he became convinced of its impropriety in a dramattick dialogue, his neglect of rhyming (for he never wholly disused it) seems to have been *gradual*. As, therefore, most of his early productions are characterized by the multitude of similar terminations which they exhibit, whenever, of two early pieces, it is doubtful which preceded the other, I am dis-

*Love's Labour Lost* was not entered at Stationers-Hall till the 23d of January 1606, but is mentioned by Francis Meres \* in his *Wit's Treasury, or The Second Part of Wit's Commonwealth* †, in 1598, and was printed in that year. In the title-page of this edition (the oldest hitherto discovered), this piece is said to have been *presented before her highness [Queen Elizabeth] the last Christmas [1597]*, and to be *newly cor-*

posed to believe (other proofs being wanting), that play, in which the greater number of rhymes is found, to have been first composed. This, however, must be acknowledged to be but a fallible criterion; for the *Three Parts of King Henry VI.* which appear to have been among our author's earliest compositions, do not abound in rhymes.

\* This writer, to whose list of our author's plays we are so much indebted, appears, from the following passage of the work here mentioned, to have been personally acquainted with Shakspeare:

"As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweet witty soul of Ovid lies in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakspeare. Witness his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugured *Sonnets* among his private friends, &c." *Wit's Treasury*, p. 282. There is no edition of Shakspeare's *Sonnets*, now extant, of so early a date as 1598, when Meres's book was printed; so that we may conclude, he was one of those friends to whom they were privately recited, before their publication.

† This book was probably published in the latter-end of the year 1598; for it was not entered at Stationers-Hall till September in that year,

*reflected and augmented* : from which it should seem, that there had been a former impression.

Mr. Gildon, in his observations on *Love's Labour Lost*, says, "he cannot see why the author gave it this name."—The following lines exhibit the train of thoughts, which probably suggested to Shakspeare this title, as well as that which anciently was affixed to another of his comedies—*Love's Labour Won*.

"To be in love where scorn is bought with groans,

"Coy looks with heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's mirth

"With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights :

"If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain ;

"If lost, why then a grievous labour won."

*Two Gentlemen of Verona. Act. I. sc. i.*

### 3. THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI. 1591.

The regular *First Part of King Henry VI.* was not published till 1623, at which time it was entered at Stationers-Hall by the printers of the earliest folio, under the name of *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* In one sense it might be called so; for *two* parts had appeared before. But considering the history of that reign, and the period of time it comprehends, it ought to have been called, what in fact it is, *The First Part of King Henry VI.* Why this *First Part* was not entered on the Stationers' books with the other two, it is impossible now to determine. That it was written before the *Second* and *Third Parts*, Dr. Johnson thinks,

Dd iij

appears



appears indubitably from the series of events. "It is apparent," he says, "that *The Second Part* begins where the former ends, and continues the series of transactions of which it pre-supposes the first part already known. This is a sufficient proof that the *Second* and *Third Parts* were not written without dependance on *The First*, though they were printed as containing a complete period of history."

I once thought differently from the learned commentator; imagining that *The First Part of King Henry VI.* was not written till after the two other parts. But on an attentive examination of these three plays, I have found sufficient reason to subscribe to Dr. Johnson's opinion.

This piece is supposed to have been produced in the year 1591, on the authority of Thomas Nashe, who in a tract, entitled, *Pierce Pennyless his Supplication to the Devil*, which was published in 1592\*, expressly mentions one of the characters in it, who does not appear in the *Second or Third Part of King Henry VI.* nor, I believe, in any other play of that time. "How, says he, would it have joyed brave *Talbot*, the terror of the French†, to think that after he had lain

\* This was the first edition, for it was not entered on the Stationers' books before that year.

† Thus *Talbot* is described in *The First Part of King Henry VI.* Act I. sc. iii.

"Here, said they, is the terror of the French."

Again,



lain two hundred years in his tomb, he should triumph again on the stage, and have his bones new embalmed, with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least (at several times), who, in the tragedian that represents his person, imagine they behold him fresh bleeding."

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4. } *SECOND AND THIRD PARTS OF KING*  
5. } *HENRY VI.* 1592.

In a tract already mentioned, entitled *Greene's Groatsworth of Witte*, &c. which was written before the end of the year 1592, there is, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed \*, a parody on a line in *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* and an allusion to the name of Shakspeare.

These two historical dramas were entered on the books of the Stationers-Company, March 12, 1593-4, but were not printed till the year 1600. In their second titles they are called—*THE FIRST AND SECOND PARTS of the Contention of the two famous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster*; but in reality they are *THE SECOND and THIRD PARTS of King Henry VI.*

In the last chorus of *King Henry V.* Shakspeare alludes to the *Second Part*, perhaps to *all* the parts of *King Henry VI.* as popular performances, that had fre-

Again, in Act V. sc. i.

"Is Talbot slain, the Frenchmen's only scourge,  
Your kingdom's terror?"—

\* See vol. VI. p. ult.

quently

quently been exhibited on the stage; and expresses a hope, that *King Henry V.* may, *for their sake*, meet with a favourable reception; a plea, which he scarcely would have urged, if he had not been their author.

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#### 6. *THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*, 1593.

This comedy was not entered on the books of the Stationers-Company till 1623, at which time it was first printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, and bears strong internal marks of an early composition.

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#### 7. *THE WINTER'S TALE*, 1594.

*The Winter's Tale* was, perhaps, entered on the Stationers' books, May 22, 1594, under the name of *A Wynter Nyght's Pastime*; which might have been the same play. It is observable that Shakspeare has two other similar titles;—*Twelfth Night*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: and it appears that the titles of his plays were sometimes changed; thus, *All's Well that Ends Well*, we have reason to think, was called *Love's Labour Won*: and *Hamlet* was sometimes called *Hamlet's REVENGE*, sometimes *THE HISTORY of Hamlet*. However, it must not be concealed, that *The Winter's Tale* is not enumerated among our author's plays, by Meres, in 1598: a circumstance which, yet, is not decisive to shew that it was not then written; for neither is *Hamlet* nor *King Henry VI.* mentioned by him.

Greene's *Dorastus and Fawnia*, from which the plot of this play is borrowed, was published in 1588.

*The Winter's Tale* was acted at court in the beginning of the year 1618 \*. It was not printed till 1623.

Mr. Walpole thinks, that this play was intended by Shakspere as an indirect apology for Anne Boleyn; and considers it as a Second Part to *K. Henry VIII* †. My respect for that very judicious and ingenious writer, the silence of Meres, and the circumstance of there not being one rhyming couplet throughout this piece, except in the chorus, make me doubt whether it ought not to be ascribed to the year 1601, or 1602, rather than that in which it is here placed.

### 8. *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, 1595.

The poetry of this piece, glowing with all the warmth of a youthful and lively imagination, the many scenes that it contains of almost continual rhyme ‡, the poverty of the fable, and want of discrimination among the higher personages, dispose me to believe that it was one of our author's earliest attempts in comedy.

It seems to have been written, while the ridiculous competitions, prevalent amongst the histrionick tribe, were strongly impressed by novelty on his mind. He would naturally copy those manners first, with which he was first acquainted. The ambition of a theatrical candidate for applause he has happily ridiculed in

\* MS. of the late Mr. Vertue.

† *Historick Doubts*.

‡ Ante, p. 294.

*Bottom* the Weaver. But among the more dignified persons of the drama we look in vain for any traits of character. The manners of Hippolita, the *Amazon*, are undistinguished from those of other females. Theseus, the associate of Hercules, is not engaged in any adventure worthy of his rank or reputation, nor is he in reality an agent throughout the play. Like *K. Henry VIII.* he goes out a Maying. He meets the lovers in perplexity, and makes no effort to promote their happiness; but when supernatural accidents have reconciled them, he joins their company, and concludes his day's entertainment by uttering some miserable puns at an interlude represented by a troop of clowns. Over the fairy part of the drama he cannot be supposed to have any influence. This part of the fable, indeed (at least as much of it as relates to the quarrels of Oberon and Titania), was not of our author's invention\*.—Through the whole piece, the  
more

\* The learned editor of *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, printed in 1775, observes in his introductory discourse (Vol. IV. p. 161.) that Pluto and Proserpine in the Merchant's Tale, appear to have been "the true progenitors of Shakspere's *Oberon and Titania*." In a tract already quoted, *Greene's Groatworth of Witte*, 1592, a player is introduced, who boasts of having performed the part of *The King of Fairies* with applause. Greene himself wrote a play, entitled *The Scottishe Historie of James the Fourthe, slaine at Floddon*, intermixed with a pleasant Comedie presented by *Oberon King of the Fairies*; which was entered at Stationers-Hall

more exalted characters are subservient to the interest of those beneath them. We laugh with Bottom and his fellows, but is a single passion agitated by the faint and childish solitudes of Hermia and Demetrius, of Helena and Lysander, those shadows of each other?—That a drama, of which the principal personages are thus insignificant, and the fable thus meagre and uninteresting, was one of our author's earliest compositions, does not, therefore, seem a very improbable conjecture; nor are the beauties with which it is embellished, inconsistent with this supposition; for the genius of Shakspeare, even in its minority, could embroider the coarsest materials with the brightest and most lasting colours.

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* was not entered at Stationers-Hall, till October 8, 1600, in which year it was printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598.

From the comedy of *Dr. Dodipoll* Mr. Steevens has quoted a line, which the author seems to have borrowed from Shakspeare:

Hall in 1594, and printed in 1598. Shakspeare, however, does not appear to have been indebted to this piece. The plan of it is shortly this, Bohan, a Scot, in consequence of being disgusted with the world, having retired to a tomb where he has fixed his dwelling, is met by *Aster Oberon*, king of the fairies, who entertains him with an antick or dance by his subjects. These two personages, after some conversation, determine to listen to a tragedy, which is acted before them, and to which they make a kind of chorus, by moralizing at the end of each act.

“ ’Twas



" 'Twas I that led you through the painted meads,  
 " Where the light *fairies* danc'd upon the *flowers*,  
 " *Hanging in ev'ry leaf an orient pearl.*"

So, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,

" And *hang a pearl* in ev'ry cowslip's ear."

Again,

" And that same dew, which sometimes on the buds  
 " Was wont to swell, like round and *orient pearls*,  
 " Stood now within the pretty *flouret's* eyes,  
 " Like tears," &c.—

There is no earlier edition of the anonymous play in which the foregoing lines are found, than that in 1600; but *Dr. Dodipoll* is mentioned by Nashe, in his preface to *Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is up*, printed in 1596. This, therefore, is another circumstance, that in some measure authorises the date here assigned to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The passage in the fifth act, which, with some probability, has been thought to allude to the death of Spenser \*, is not inconsistent with the early appearance of this comedy; for it might have been inserted between the time of the poet's death, and the year 1600, when the play was published. And indeed, if the allusion was intended, the passage must have been

\* "The thrice three muses mourning for the death  
 Of learning, late deccas'd in beggary."

added



added in that interval; for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was certainly written in, or before, 1598; and Spenser, we are told by Sir James Ware (whose testimony with respect to this controverted point must have great weight), did not die till 1599: "others (he adds), have it *wrongly*, 1598 \*." So careful a searcher into antiquity, who lived so near the time, is not likely to have been mistaken in a fact, concerning which he appears to have made particular inquiries.

\* Preface to Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*. Dublin, fol. 1633. This treatise was written, according to Sir James Ware, in 1596. The testimony of that historian, relative to the time of Spenser's death, is confirmed by a fact related by Ben Jonson to Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, and recorded by that writer. When Spenser and his wife were forced in great distress to fly from their house, which was burnt in the Irish Rebellion, the Earl of Essex sent him twenty pieces; but he refused them; telling the person that brought them, he was sure he had no time to spend them. He died soon after, according to Ben Jonson's account, in King-Street, Dublin. Lord Essex was not in Ireland in 1598, and was there from April to September in the following year.—If Spenser had died in London, as Cambrden says he did, his death would probably have been mentioned by Rowland Whyte, in his letters to Sir Robert Sydney (brother to the poet's great patron), which are still extant, and contain a minute detail of most of the memorable occurrences of that time.

It should likewise be remembered that *Verses* by Spenser are prefixed to Lewknor's *Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, printed in 1599.

9. *ROMEO AND JULIET*, 1595.

It has been already observed, that our author, in his early plays, appears to have been much addicted to rhyming; a practice from which he gradually departed, though he never wholly deserted it. In this piece *more* rhymes, I believe, are found, than in any other of his plays, *Love's Labour Lost* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* only excepted. This circumstance, the story on which it is founded, so likely to captivate a young poet, the imperfect form in which it originally appeared, and its very early publication \*, all incline me to believe that this was Shakspeare's first tragedy; for the three parts of *K. Henry VI.* do not pretend to that title.

“A new ballad of *Romeo and Juliet*” (perhaps our author's play), was entered on the Stationers' books, August 5, 1596 †, and the first sketch of the play was printed

\* There is no edition of any of our author's genuine plays extant, prior to 1597, when *Romeo and Juliet* was published.

† There is no entry in the Stationers' books relative to the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, antecedent to its publication in 1597, if this does not relate to it. This entry was made by Edward Whyte, and therefore is not likely to have related to the poem called *Romeo and Julietta*, which was entered in 1582, by Richard Tottel. How vague the description of plays was at this time, may appear from the

printed in 1597 : but it did not appear in its present form till two years afterwards.

Few of his plays appear to have been entered at Stationers-Hall, till they had been some time in possession of the stage ; on which account it may be conjectured that this tragedy was written in 1595.

If the following passage in an old comedy already mentioned, entitled *Dr. Dodipoll*, which had appeared before 1596, be considered as an imitation, it may add some weight to the supposition that *Romeo and Juliet* had been exhibited before that year :

“ The glorious parts of fair Lucilia.

“ Take them and join them in the heavenly spheres,

following entry, which is found in the Stationers' books, an. 1590, and seems to relate to Marlowe's *tragedy* of *Tamburlaine*, published in that year, by Richard Jones :

“ To Richard Jones] Twoe Commical *Discourses* of *Tamburlein*, the *Cythian Shepparde*.”

In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, as originally performed, several comick interludes were introduced ; whence, perhaps, the epithet *comical* was added to the title.—As tragedies were sometimes entitled *discourses*, so a grave poem or *sad discourse* in verse (to use the language of the times), was frequently denominated a *tragedy*. All the poems inserted in the *Mirroure for Magistrates*, and some of Drayton's pieces, are called *tragedies*, by Meres and other ancient writers. Some of Sir David Lindsay's poems, though not in a dramattick form, are also by their author entitled *tragedies*.

" And fix them there as an eternal light  
 " For Lovers to adore and wonder at."

*Dr. Dodipoll.*

" Take him and cut him out into little stars,  
 " And he will make the face of heaven so fine,  
 " That all the world shall be in love with night,  
 " And pay no worship to the garish sun."

*Romeo and Juliet.*

Mr. Steevens in his observations on *Romeo and Juliet* has quoted these lines from Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*:

" And nought-respecting *death* (the last of paines)  
 " Plac'd his *pale colours* (th' *ensign* of his might)  
 " Upon his new-got spoil, &c."

So in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act V. Sc. iii.

————— " Beauty's *ensign* yet  
 " Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,  
 " And *death's pale flag* is not advanced there."

That Shakspeare imitated Daniel, or was imitated by him, there can, I think, be little doubt. The early appearance of *The Complaint of Rosamond* \* (which is commended by Nashe, in a tract entitled *Pierce Penni-*

\* " A booke called *Delia*, containynge diverse sonates, with the *Complainte of Rosamonde*," was entered at Stationers-Hall by Simon Waterson, in Feb. 1591-2.

*esse his Supplication, Ec. 1592*), seems to authorize the former opinion.

From a speech of the Nurse in this play, which contains these words—"It is now since the earthquake eleven years, &c." Mr. Tyrwhitt conjectures, that *Romeo and Juliet*, or at least part of it, was written in 1591; the novels from which Shakspeare may be supposed to have drawn his story, not mentioning any such circumstance; while, on the other hand, there actually was an earthquake in England on the 6th of April 1580, which he might here have had in view\*.—It is not without great distrust of my own opinion that I express my dissent from a gentleman, to whose judgment the highest respect is due; but, I own, this argument does not appear to me conclusive. It seems extremely improbable that Shakspeare, when he was writing this tragedy, should have adverted, with such precision, to the date of an earthquake that had been felt in his youth; unless we suppose him to have entertained so strange and incongruous a thought, as to wish to persuade his audience, that the events which are the subject of his play happened at Verona in 1591, at the very moment that a dramatick representation of them was exhibiting in London: for if *Romeo and Juliet* was written in 1591, it probably was then also represented. The passage quoted strikes me, as only displaying one of those characteristical traits, which distinguish old people of the lower class; who delight

\* See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. Sc. iii.



in enumerating a multitude of minute circumstances that have no relation to the business immediately under their consideration\*, and are particularly fond of computing time from extraordinary events, such as battles, comets, plagues, and earthquakes. This feature of their character our author has, in various places, strongly marked. Thus (to mention one of many instances) the Grave-digger in *Hamlet* says, that he came to his employment, "of all the days i' th' year, that day that the last king o'ercame *Fortinbras*—that very day that young *Hamlet* was born."—Shakspeare probably remembered the earthquake in 1580, and thought he might introduce one, *for the nonce*, at Mantua. Why he has placed this earthquake at the distance of *eleven* years, it is not very easy to determine. However, it may be observed, that having supposed it to have happened on the day on which Juliet was weaned, he could not well have made it more distant than *thirteen* years; which, indeed, from the context, should seem to be the true reading. Supposing the author to have used figures, the mistake might easily have happened.—At present there is a manifest contradiction in the Nurse's account; for she expressly

\* Thus Mrs. Quickly in *K. Henry IV.* reminds Falstaff, that, he "swore, on a parcel-gilt goblet, to marry her, sitting in her Dolphin chamber, at a round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the prince broke his head for likening his father to a singing man of Windsor."

says,



says, that Juliet was within a fortnight and odd days of completing her *fourteenth year*; and yet, according to the computation here made, she could not well be much more than *twelve years* old. Perhaps Shakspeare was more careful to mark the garrulity, than the precision of the old woman;—or perhaps, he meant this very incorrectness as a trait of her character:—or, without having recourse to either of these suppositions, shall we say, that our author was here, as in some other places, hasty and inattentive? It is certain that there is nothing in which he is less accurate, than the computation of time. Of his negligence in this respect, *As you Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Othello*, furnish remarkable instances\*.

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#### 10. COMEDY OF ERRORS, 1596.

In a tract, written by Thomas Decker, entitled, *Newes from Hell brought by the Devil's Carrier*, 1606, there seems to be an allusion to this comedy:

“—his ignorance (arising from his blindness) is the only cause of this *Comedie of Errors*.”

This play was neither entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623, but is mentioned by

\* See *Merry Wives of Windsor*, A& II. Sc. last.—*Measure for Measure*, A& I. Sc. iii. and iv.—*As you Like It*, A& IV. Sc. i. and iii.—*Othello*, A& III. Sc. iii. “I slept the next night well,” &c.

Meres in 1598; and exhibits internal proofs of having been an early production. It could not, however, have been written before 1596; for the translation of the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, from which the plot was taken, was not published till 1595.

The *alternate* rhimes that are found in this play, as well as in *Love's Labour Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, are a farther proof that these pieces were among our author's earliest dramattick productions. We are told by himself, that *Venus and Adonis* was his first composition. *The Rape of Lucrece* was probably the next. When he turned his thoughts to the stage, the measure that he had used in these poems naturally presented itself to him in his first dramattick essays.

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### 11. HAMLET, 1596.

The tragedy of *Hamlet* was not registered in the books of the Stationers-Company till the 26th of July 1602, nor printed till 1604. The circumstance, and indeed the general air of the play itself, which has not, it must be owned, the appearance of an early composition, might induce us to class it five or six years later than 1596, were we not over-powered by the proof adduced by Dr. Farmer, and by other circumstances, from which it appears to have been acted in,

or before, that year \*. The piece, however, which was then exhibited, was probably but a rude sketch of that which we now possess; for, from the title-page of the first edition, in 1604, we learn, that (like *Romeo and Juliet*, and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*) it had been enlarged to almost twice its original size.

*The Case is altered*, a comedy, attributed to Ben Jonson, and written before the end of the year 1599 †, contains a passage, which seems to me to have a reference to this play:

*Angelo*. "But first I'll play the ghost; I'll call him out §."

In the second act of *Hamlet*, a contest between the

\* "Dr. Lodge published, in the year 1596, a pamphlet called *Wit's Miserie, or the World's Madnesse, discovering the incarnate Devils of the age*, quarto. One of these devils is *Hate-Virtue, or sorrow for another man's successe*, who, says the doctor, is a *foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the vizard of the ghost, who cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge*." Barmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*.

† This comedy was not printed till 1609, but it had appeared many years before. The time when it was written is ascertained with great precision by the following circumstances. It contains an allusion to Mere's *Wit's Treasury*, first printed in the latter-end of the year 1598 (ante, p. 276.) and is itself mentioned by Nashe in his *Lenten Stuff*, 4to. 1599.—"It is right of the merry cobbler's stuff, in that witty play of *The Case is Altered*."

§ Jonson's Works, vol. vii. p. 362. Whalley's edition.

children

children of the queen's chapel \*, and the actors of the established theatres, is alluded to. At what time that contest began, is uncertain. But, should it appear not to have commenced till some years after the date here assigned, it would not, I apprehend, be a sufficient reason for ascribing this play to a later period; for, as we are certain that considerable additions were made to it after its first production, and have some authority for attributing the first sketch of it to 1596, till that authority is shaken, we may presume, that any passage which is inconsistent with that date was not in the play originally, but a subsequent insertion.

With respect to the allusion in question, it probably was an addition; for it is not found in the quarto of 1604 (which has not the appearance of a mutilated or imperfect copy), nor did it appear in print till the publication of the folio in 1623.

The same observation may be made on the passage produced by Mr. Holt, to prove that this play was not written till after 1597: "*Their inhibition comes by means of the late innovation.*" This, indeed, does

\* Between the years 1595 and 1600, some of Lilly's comedies were performed by these children. Many of the plays of Jonson were represented by them between 1600 and 1609.—From a passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or the Comedy of Pasquil and Catherine*, which was printed in 1601, we learn that they were much followed at that time.

appear in the quarto of 1604, but, we may presume, was added in the interval between 1597 (when the statute alluded to—39 Eliz. ch. 4.—was enacted), and that year.

*Hamlet* \* Sadler was one of the witnesses to Shakspeare's Will. He was probably born soon after the first exhibition of this play; and, according to this date, was twenty years old at the time of his attestation.

If this tragedy had not appeared till some years after the date here assigned, he would not have been at the time of Shakspeare's death above sixteen or seventeen years old; at which age he scarcely would have been chosen as a witness to so solemn an act.

The following passage, in *An Epistle to the Gentlemen Students of the Two Universities*, by Thomas Nashe, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia* (which has no date), has been thought to allude to this play.—“I will turn back to my first text of studies of delight, and talk a little in friendship with a few of our trivial

\* It has been observed to me, that there are other instances of this being used as a Christian name; it is certainly very uncommon, and may be fairly supposed, in this case, to have taken its rise from the play.—After all, however, it is not quite clear that this was his name. The name subscribed to Shakspeare's original Will (which I have seen) seems to be *Hamnet*; but in the body of the Will he is called *Hamlet Sadler*.

translators.



translators \*. It is a common practice now-a-days, among a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every art, and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born, and busie themselves with the endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinize their neck-verse if they should have neede; yet English *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yeelds many good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so forth: and if you intreat him faire in a frosty morning, he will affoord you whole hamlets, I should say, handfuls of tragical speeches. But, O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*—what is that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and *Seneca*, let bloud line by line and page by page, at length must needes die to our stage."

This passage does not, in my apprehension, decisively prove that our author's *Hamlet* was written so early as 1591 (in which year † Dr. Farmer, on good grounds, conjectures that Greene's *Arcadia* was published; for supposing this to have been a sneer at

\* The person, whom Nashe had in contemplation in this passage, was, I believe, *Thomas Kyd*. The only play to which his name is affixed (*Cornelia*), is a professed translation from the French of Garnier, who imitated *Seneca*, as did also Kyd. MALONE.

† Mr. Oldys, in his MS. Additions to Langbaine's *Lives of the Dramatick Poets*, says, on I know not what authority, that Greene's *Arcadia* was printed in 1589. If he is right, it is still less probable that this passage should have related to our author's *Hamlet*.

Shakspeare,



Shakspere, it might have been inserted in some new editions of this tract after 1596, it being a frequent practice of Nashe and Greene, to make additions to their pamphlets at every re-impression.

But it is by no means clear, that Shakspere was the person whom Nashe had here in contemplation. He seems to point at some dramattick writer of that time, who had been originally a scrivener or attorney :—

“ *A clerk foredoom'd his father's soul to cross,*

“ *Who penn'd a stanza when he should engross :\**”

Who, instead of transcribing deeds and pleadings, chose to imitate Seneca's plays, of which a translation had been published not many years before.—“ *The Trade of Noverint*” is the trade of an attorney or notary \*. Shakspere was not bred to the law, at least we have no such tradition; nor, however freely he may have borrowed from North's *Plutarch* and Holinshed's *Chronicle*, does he appear to be at all indebted to the translation of *Seneca*.

Of all the writers of the age of queen Elizabeth, Nashe is the most licentious in his language; perpe-

\* “ *The country lawyers too jog down apace,*

*Each with his noverint universi face.*”

Ravenscroft's Prologue prefixed to *Titus Andronicus*.

Our ancient deeds were written in Latin, and frequently began with the words, *Noverint Universi*. The form is still retained: *Know all men*, &c.

tually distorting words from their primitive signification, in a manner often puerile and ridiculous, but more frequently incomprehensible and absurd. His prose works, if they were collected together, would perhaps exhibit a greater farrago of unintelligible jargon, than is to be found in the productions of any author ancient or modern. An argument that rests on a term used by such a writer, has but a weak foundation.

The phrase—"whole hamlets of tragical speeches"—is certainly intelligible, without supposing an allusion to the play; and might have only meant a *large quantity*.—We meet a similar expression in our author's *Cymbeline*.

"I'd let a *parish* of such Clotens blood."—

It should also be observed, "that hamlets," in the foregoing passage, is not printed in Italicks \*, though the word *Seneca*, in the same sentence, is; and all the quotations, authors' names, and *books* mentioned in this epistle, are distinguished by that character.

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## 12. KING JOHN, 1596.

This is the only one of our poet's uncontested plays that is not entered in the books of the Stationers-Company. It was not printed till 1623, but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, unless he mistook the old

\* It is so printed in the edition of 1589. FARMER.

play in two parts, printed in 1591, for the composition of Shakspeare\*.

In the first act of *King John*, an ancient tragedy, entitled *Solyman and Perseda*, is alluded to. The earliest edition of that play, now extant, is that of 1599, but it was written, and probably acted, many years before; for it was entered on the Stationers' books, by Edward Whyte, November 20, 1592.

Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, printed in 1603, contains a passage, which, if it should be considered as an imitation of a similar one in *King John*, will ascertain this historical drama to have been written at least before that year:

"Then how much more in me, whose youthful veins,  
" *Like a proud river, overflow their bounds.*"

\* It is observable, that on the republication of this old play in 1611, the two parts are set forth—"as they were (sundry times) lately acted by the *Queene's Majesties servants*"—a description, which, probably, was copied literally from the former edition in 1591. If this had been really Shakspeare's performance, it would have been described, on its re-impression, *as acted by his Majesty's servants*; for so runs the title of most of his genuine pieces, that were either originally printed or re-published after the year 1603. The bookseller, the better to impose on the publick, prefixed the letters W. Sh. to the new edition of this play in 1611, which do not appear in the former impression in 1591.

So in *King John* :

“ Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,

“ *Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds.*”

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13. *RICHARD II.* 1597.

*King Richard II.* was entered on the Stationers' books, August 29, 1597, and printed in that year.

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14. *RICHARD III.* 1597.

Entered at the Stationers-Hall, October 20, 1597. Printed in that year.

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15. *FIRST PART OF K. HENRY IV.* 1597.

Entered February 25, 1597, according to our present reckoning, 1598. Written, therefore, probably in 1597. Printed in 1598.

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16. *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE,* 1598.

Entered July 22, 1598; and mentioned by Meres in that year. Published in 1600.

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17. *ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL,* 1598.

*All's Well that Ends Well* was not entered at Stationers-Hall, nor printed, till 1623; but probably is the play mentioned by Meres, in 1598, under the title of *Love's Labour Won*. This comedy was, I believe, also sometimes called *A Bad Beginning makes a Good Ending*; for I find that a play with that title,  
together

together with *Hotspur*, *Benedict* and *Beatrix*, and several others, was acted at court, by John Heminge's company, in the year 1613; and no such piece is to be found in any collection, however complete or extensive, nor is such a title preserved in any list or catalogue whatsoever. As the titles of *Hotspur* and *Benedict* and *Beatrix*, were substituted in the place of *The First Part of King Henry IV.* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, it is probable that the other was only a new name for *All's Well that Ends Well*.

By an entry in the hand-writing of king Charles I. in a copy of the second edition of our author's plays in folio, which formerly belonged to that monarch, and is now in the possession of Mr. Steevens, it appears, that this play was also sometimes called *Mr. Parolles*.

### 18. SECOND PART OF K. HENRY IV. 1598.

*The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* was entered on the Stationers' books, August 23, 1600, and was printed in that year. It was, probably, written in the latter-end of the year 1598; for from the epilogue it appears to have been composed before *K. Henry V.* which itself must have been written in, or before, 1599.

I suppose this drama to have been written in the latter part of the year 1598, because Meres, who in his *Wit's Treasury* (which was not published before September in that year) has enumerated *Henry IV.* among our author's plays, does not speak of it as a



first part, nor does he mention it as a play in *two* parts. His words are these; "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latines; so Shakspeare, among the English, is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage: for comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love's Labour Lost*, his *Love's Labour Wonne*, his *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and his *Merchant of Venice*; for tragedy \*, his *Richard II.* *Richard III.* *HENRY IV.* *K. John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet* †."

The following allusion to one of the characters in this play, which is found in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, Act V. sc. ii. first acted in 1599, is an additional authority for supposing *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* to have been written in 1598.

"Savi. What's he, gentle Mons. Brisk? Not that gentleman?"

"Fast. No, Lady; this is a kinsman to *Justice Silence*."

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### 19. KING HENRY V. 1599.

Mr. Pope thought that this historical drama was one of our author's latest compositions; but he was

\* The circumstance of Hotspur's death in this play, and its being an historical drama, I suppose, induced *Meres* to denominate *The First Part of King Henry IV.* a tragedy,

† *Wit's Treasury*, p. 282.

evidently



evidently mistaken. *King Henry V.* was entered on the Stationers' books, August 14, 1600, and printed in the same year. It was written *after* the Second Part of *K. Henry IV.* being promised in the epilogue of that play; and while the Earl of Essex was in Ireland\*. Lord Essex went to Ireland, April 15, 1599, and returned to London on the 28th of September, in the same year. So that this play (unless the passage relative to him was inserted after the piece was finished) must have been composed between April and September 1599. Supposing that passage a subsequent insertion, the play was probably not written *long* before; for it is not mentioned by Meres in 1598.

The prologue † to Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, seems clearly to allude to this play; and, if we were sure that it was written at the same time with the piece itself, might induce us, notwithstanding the silence of Meres, to place *King Henry V.* a year or two earlier; for *Every Man in his Humour* is said to have been acted in 1598. But I suspect that the prologue, which now appears before it, was not written till after 1601, when the play was printed without a prologue. It

\* See the Chorus to the fifth act of *King Henry V.*

† "He rather prays you will be pleas'd to see

"One such, to-day, as other plays should be;

"Where neither Chorus wafts you o'er the seas, &c."

Prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*. Vol. 1616.

appears to have been Jonson's first performance\*; and we may presume that it was the very play, which, we are told, was brought on the stage by the good offices of Shakspeare, who himself acted in it†. Malignant and envious as Jonson appears to have been, he hardly would have ridiculed his benefactor at the very time he was so essentially obliged to him. Some years afterwards, his jealousy probably broke out, and vented itself in this prologue. It is certain that, not long after the year 1600, a coolness ‡ arose between  
Shakspeare

\* Jonson himself tells us, in his Induction to *The Magnetick Lady*, that this was his first dramattick performance.—  
“The author beginning his studies of this kind with *Every Man in his Humour*.”

† If the names of the actors, prefixed to this play, were arranged in the same order as the persons represented, which is very probable, Shakspeare played the part of *Old Knowell*. It is said, that he also played the part of Adam in *As You Like It*; and we are informed by Betterton, that he performed the *Ghost* in his own *Hamlet*. We may presume, therefore, that he usually represented old men.

‡ See an old comedy called *The Return from Parnassus*: [This piece was not published till 1606; but appears to have been written in 1602—certainly was produced before the death of Queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March 1603.] “Why here's our fellow Shakspeare puts them all down; ay, and *Ben Jonson* too. O, that *Ben Jonson* is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving

Shakspere and him, which, however he may talk of his almost idolatrous affection, produced on his part,

giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakspere hath given him a purge, that made him bewray his credit."

The play of Jonson's, in which *he gave the poets a pill*, is the *Poetaster*, acted in 1601. In that piece some passages of *King Henry V.* are ridiculed. In what manner Shakspere *put him down*, or *made him bewray his credit*, does not appear. His retaliation, we may be well assured, contained no gross or illiberal abuse; and, perhaps, did not go beyond a ballad or an epigram, which may have perished with things of greater consequence. He has, however, marked his disregard for the calumniator of his fame, by not leaving him any memorial by his Will.—In an apologetical dialogue that Jonson annexed to the *Poetaster*, he says, he had been provoked for three years (i. e. from 1598 to 1601) on every stage by slanderers; as for the players, he says,

"It is true, I taxed them,  
And yet but some, and those so sparingly,  
As all the rest might have sat still unquestion'd:—  
———What they have done against me  
I am not mov'd with. If it gave them meat,  
Or got them cloaths, 'tis well; that was their end.  
Only amongst them, I am sorry for  
Some better natures, by the rest drawn in  
To run in that vile line."

By the words "*Some better natures*," there can, I think, be little doubt that Shakspere was alluded to.

from

from that time to the death of our author, and for many years afterwards, much clumsy sarcasm and many malevolent reflections \*.

On this play Mr. Pope has the following note, Act I. Sc. i.

“ This first scene was added since the edition of 1608, which is much short of the present editions, wherein

\* In his *Silent Woman*, Act V. Sc. ii. 1609, Jonson perhaps pointed at Shakspeare, as one whom he *viewed with scornful, yet with jealous eyes* :

“ So, they may censure poets and authors, and compare them ; Daniel with Spenser, Jonson with *t'other youth*, and so forth.” Decker, however, might have been meant.

In the Induction to *Bartholomew-Fair*, which was acted in 1614, two years before the death of our author, three of his plays, and in the piece itself two others, are attempted to be ridiculed.

In *The Devil's an Ass*, acted in 1616, all his historical plays are obliquely censured.

*Meer-er*. “ By my faith you are cunning in the chronicles.

*Fitz-Dot*. “ No, I confess, I ha't from the play-books, and think they are more authentick.”

They are again attacked in the Induction to *Bartholomew-Fair* :

“ An some writer that I know had but the penning o'this matter, he would ha' made you such a *jig-a-jog i' the booths*, you should ha' thought an *earthquake* had been in the fair. But these *master-poets*, they will ha' their own absurd courses, they will be informed of nothing.”

The

wherein the speeches are generally enlarged, and raised; several whole scenes besides, and the choruses also, were since *added by Shakspeare*."

Dr. Warburton also positively asserts that this first scene was written after the accession of K. James I.; and the subsequent editors agree, that several additions were made *by the author* to *King Henry V.* after it was originally

The following passage in *Cynthia's Revels*, 1601, was, I think, likewise pointed against Shakspeare:

"Besides they would wish your poets would leave to be promoters of other men's jests, and to way-lay all the stale apophthegms or *old books* they can hear of, in print or otherwise, to farce their scenes withal:—Again, that feeding their friends with nothing of their own, but what they have *twice or thrice cooked*, they should not wantonly give out how soon they had *dress'd it*, nor how many coaches came to carry away the broken meat, besides hobby-horses and foot-cloth nags."

Jonson's plots were all his own invention; our author's chiefly taken from preceding plays or novels. The former employed a year or two in composing a play; the latter probably produced two every year, while he remained in the theatre.

The Induction to *The Staple of News*, which appeared in 1625, not very long after the publication of our author's plays in folio, contains a sneer at a passage in *Julius Cæsar*:

"Know Cæsar doth not wrong; nor without cause

"Will he be satisfied:"

which



originally composed. But there is, I believe, no good ground for these assertions. It is true, that no perfect edition of this play was published before that in folio, in 1623; but it does not follow from thence, that the scenes which then first appeared in print, and all the choruses, were added by *Shakspeare*, as Mr. Pope supposes,

which for the purpose of ridicule is quoted unfaithfully; and in the same play may be found an effort, as impotent as that of *Voltaire*\*, to raise a laugh at Hamlet's exclamation, when he kills Polonius.

Some other passages, which are found in Jonson's works, might be mentioned in support of this observation; but being quoted hereafter for other purposes, they are here omitted.

Notwithstanding these proofs, Jonson's malevolence to *Shakspeare*, and jealousy of his superior reputation, have been doubted by Mr. Pope and others; and much stress has been laid on a passage in his *Discoveries*, and on the commendatory verses prefixed to the first edition of our author's plays in folio.—The reader, after having perused the following character of Jonson, drawn by Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, a contemporary, and an intimate acquaintance of his, will not, perhaps, readily believe these *posthumous* eulogiums to have been sincere. “ Ben

\* “ *Ah! ma mere, s'écrie-t-il, il y a un gros rat derrière la tapisserie—il tire son épée, court au rat, et tue le bon homme Polonius.*”—Oeuvres de *Voltaire*, Tome XV. p. 473, 4to.

“ *Le prince tue le pere de sa maitresse, feignant de tuer un rat.*”—Tome IX. Dissertation sur la tragedie ancienne et moderne, p. 26.

Jonson



poses, after 1608. We know, indeed, the contrary to be true: for the chorus to the fifth act must have been written in 1599. The fair inference to be drawn from the imperfect and mutilated copies of this play, published in 1600, 1602, and 1608, is, not that the

Jonson (says that writer), was a great lover and praiser of himself; a contemner and scorner of others, given rather to lose a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he lived; a dissembler of the parts which reign in him; a bragger of some good that he wanted: he thinketh nothing well done, but what either himself or some of his friends have said or done; he is passionately kind and angry; careless either to gain or keep; vindictive, but, if he be well answered [angry], at himself; interprets the best sayings and deeds often to the worst\*. He was for any religion, as being versed in both; oppressed with fancy, which over-mastered his reason, a general disease in many poets. His inventions are smooth and easy; but above all, he excelleth in translation. *Drummond's Works*, fol. 1711, p. 226.

In the year 1619 Jonson went to Scotland, to visit Mr. Drummond, who has left a curious account of a conversation that passed between them, relative to the principal poets of those times.

\* His misquoting a line of *Julius Caesar*, so as to render it nonsense, at a time when the play was in print, is a strong illustration of this part of his character. The plea of an unfaithful memory cannot be urged in his defence, for he tells us in his *Discoveries*, that till he was past forty, he could repeat every thing that he had written.

whole play, as we now have it, did not then exist, but that those copies were surreptitious (probably taken down in short-hand, during the representation) ; and that the editor in 1600, not being able to publish the whole, published what he could.

I have not, indeed, met with any evidence (except in three plays) that the several scenes, which are found in the folio of 1623, and are not in the preceding quartos, were added by the second labour of the author.—The last chorus of *King Henry V.* already mentioned, affords a striking proof that this was not always the case. The two copies of *The Second Part of King Henry IV.* printed in the same year (1600) furnish another. In one of these, the whole first scene of Act III. is wanting; not because it was then unwritten (for it is found in the other copy published in that year), but because the editor was not possessed of it. That what have been called *additions by the author*, were not really such, may be also collected from another circumstance; that in some of the quartos, where these supposed additions are wanting, references and replies are found to the passages omitted\*.

\* Of this see a remarkable instance in *King Henry IV. P. II. Act I. Sc. i.* where Morton, in a long speech, having informed Northumberland that the archbishop of York had joined the rebel party, the earl replies—"I knew of this before."—The quarto contains the reply, but not a single line of the narrative to which it relates.

I do not, however, mean to say, that Shakspeare never made any alterations in his plays. We have reason to believe that *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, were entirely new written; and a second revisal, or temporary topicks, might have suggested, in a course of years, some additions and alterations in all his pieces. But with respect to the entire scenes that are wanting in some of the early editions (particularly those of *King Henry V.* *King Richard II.* and *The Second Part of King Henry IV.*) I suppose the omissions to have arisen from the imperfection of the copies; and instead of saying that "the first scene of *King Henry V.* was added by the author after the publication of the quarto in 1600," all that we can pronounce with certainty is, that this scene is not found in the quarto of 1600.

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20. *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.* 1600.

*Much Ado about Nothing* was written, we may presume, early in the year 1600; for it was entered at Stationers-Hall, August 23, 1600, and printed in that year.

It is not mentioned by Meres in his list of our author's plays, published in the latter-end of the year 1598.

21. *AS YOU LIKE IT*, 1600.

This comedy was not printed till 1623, and the caveat or memorandum \* in the second volume of the books of the Stationers-Company, relative to the three plays of *As You Like It*, *Henry V.* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, has no date except Aug. 4. But immediately above that caveat there is an entry, dated May 27, 1600—and the entry immediately following it, is dated Jan. 23, 1603. We may therefore presume that this caveat was entered *between* those two periods: more especially, as the dates, scattered over the pages where this entry is found, are, except in one instance, in a regular series from 1596 to 1615. This will appear more clearly by exhibiting the entry exactly as it stands in the book:

27 May, 1600.

To Mr. Roberts.] Allarum to London.

4 Aug.

*As You Like It*, a book,  
Henry the Fifth, a book,  
Every Man in his Humour, a book,  
Comedy of Much Ado about Nothing,

} to be staied.

23 Jan. 1603.

To Thomas Thorpe, and William Aspley.] This to be their copy, &c.

\* See Mr. Steevens's extracts from the books of the Stationers-Company, ante, p. 270.

It is extremely probable that this 4th of August was of the year 1600; which standing a little higher on the paper, the clerk of the Stationers-Company might have thought unnecessary to be repeated. All the plays which were entered with *As You Like It*, and are here said to be staid, were printed in the year 1600 or 1601. The stay or injunction against the printing appears to have been very speedily taken off; for in ten days afterwards, on the 14th of August, 1600, *King Henry V.* was entered, and published in the same year. So, *Much Ado about Nothing* was entered August 23, 1600, and printed also in that year: and *Every Man in his Humour* was published in 1601.

Shakspeare, it is said, played the part of Adam in *As You Like It*. As he was not eminent on the stage, it is probable that he ceased to act some years before he retired to the country. His appearance, however, in this comedy, is not inconsistent with the date here assigned; for we know that he performed a part in Jonson's *Sejanus* in 1603.

## 22. MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, 1601.

The first sketch of this comedy was printed in 1602. It was entered in the books of the Stationers-Company, on the 18th of January 1601-2, and was, therefore, probably, written in 1601, after the *Two Parts of King Henry IV.* being, it is said, composed at the desire of queen Elizabeth, in order to exhibit Falstaff in love, when all the pleasantry which he could afford in any other situation was exhausted. But it may not be



thought so clear, that it was written after *King Henry V.* Nym and Bardolph are both hanged in *King Henry V.* yet appear in *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Falstaff is disgraced in *The Second Part of King Henry IV.* and dies in *King Henry V.* But in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* he talks as if he were yet in favour at court; "*If it should come to the ear of the court how I have been transformed, &c.*" and Mr. Page discountenances Fenton's addresses to his daughter, *because he kept company with the wild prince and with Poins.* These circumstances seem to favour the supposition that this play was written between *The First and Second Parts of King Henry IV.* But that it was not written then, may be collected from the tradition above-mentioned. If it should be placed (as Dr. Johnson observes it should be read) between *The Second Part of King Henry IV.* and *Henry V.* it must be remembered, that Mrs. Quickly, who is half-bawd, half-hostess, in *King Henry IV.* is, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Dr. Caius's housekeeper, and makes a decent appearance; and in *King Henry V.* is Pistol's wife, and dies in an hospital; a progression that is not very natural. Besides, on Mrs. Quickly's first appearance in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Falstaff does not know her, nor does she know Pistol nor Bardolph. The truth, I believe, is, that it was written *after King Henry V.* and after Shakspeare had killed Falstaff. In obedience to the royal commands, having revived him, he found it necessary, at the same time, to revive all those persons with whom he was wont to be exhibited; Nym, Pistol,



Pistol, Bardolph, and the Page; and disposed of them, as he found it convenient, without a strict regard to their situations or catastrophes in former plays.

There is reason to believe that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was revised and considerably enlarged by the author, after its first production. The old edition in 1602, like that of *Romeo and Juliet*, is apparently a rough draught, and not a mutilated or imperfect copy. At what time the alterations and additions were made, is uncertain. Mr. Warton supposes them to have been made in 1607. Dr. Farmer concurs with \* him in that opinion, though he does not think the argument, on which it is founded, conclusive. I have not met with any information on this head.

This comedy was not printed in its present state, till 1623, when it was published with the rest of our author's plays, in folio.

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### 23. KING HENRY VIII. 1601.

This play was probably written, as Dr. Johnson and Mr. Steevens observe, before the death of queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March 1603. The eulogium on king James, which is blended with the panegyrick on Elizabeth, in the last scene, was evidently a subsequent insertion, after the accession

\* Not before 1607. Probably some years after; at least not acted, as the imperfect copy was reprinted in 1619.

of the Scottish monarch to the throne ; for Shakspeare was too well acquainted with courts, to compliment, in the life-time of queen Elizabeth, her presumptive successor, of whom history informs us she was not a little jealous. That the prediction concerning king James was added after the death of the queen, is still more clearly evinced, as Dr. Johnson has remarked, by the awkward manner in which it is connected with the foregoing and subsequent lines.

It may be objected, that, if this play was written after the accession of king James, the author could not introduce a panegyrick on him, without making queen Elizabeth the vehicle of it, she being the object immediately presented to the audience in the last act of *King Henry VIII.* and that, therefore, the praises so profusely lavished on her, do *not* prove this play to have been written in her life-time : on the contrary, that the concluding lines of her character seem to imply that she was dead, when it was composed. The objection certainly has weight ; but, I apprehend, the following observations afford a sufficient answer to it.

1. It is more likely that Shakspeare should have written a play, the chief subject of which is, the disgrace of queen Catharine, the aggrandizement of Anne Boleyn, and the birth of her daughter, in the life-time of that daughter, than after her death ; at a time when the subject must have been highly pleasing at court, rather than at a period when it must have been less interesting.

Queen

Queen Catharine, it is true, is represented as an amiable character, but still she is *eclipsed*; and the greater her merit, the higher was the compliment to the mother of Elizabeth, to whose superior beauty she was obliged to give way.

2. Had *King Henry VIII.* been written in the time of king James I. the author, instead of expatiating so largely in the last scene, in praise of the queen, which he could not think would be very acceptable to her successor, would probably have made him the principal figure in the prophecy, and thrown her into the back-ground as much as possible.

3. Were James I. Shakspeare's chief object in the original construction of the last act of this play, he would, probably, have given a very short character of Elizabeth, and have *dwelt* on that of James, with whose praise he would have *concluded*, in order to make the stronger impression on the audience, instead of returning again to queen Elizabeth, in a very awkward and abrupt manner, after her character seemed to be quite finished; an awkwardness that can only be accounted for, by supposing the panegyrick on king James an after-production\*.

4. If

\* After having enumerated some of the blessings that were to ensue from the birth of Elizabeth, and celebrated her majesty's various virtues, the poet thus proceeds:

*Cran,*

4. If the queen had been dead when our author wrote this play, he would have been acquainted with the particular circumstances attending her death, the situation of the kingdom at that time, and of foreign states, &c. and, as archbishop Cranmer is supposed to have had the gift of prophecy, Shakspeare, probably, would have made him mention some of those

*Cran.* " In *her* days every man shall eat in safety,  
Under his own vine, what he plants, and sing  
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.  
God shall be truly known; and those about her  
From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,  
And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.  
[Nor shall this peace *sleep* with her; but as when  
The bird of wonder *dies*, the maiden phoenix,  
Her ashes new-create another heir,  
As great in admiration as herself;  
So shall she leave her blessedness to one, &c.

—————*He* shall flourish,  
And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches  
To all the plains about him :—our children's children  
Shall see this, and bless heaven.

*King.* Thou speakest wonders.]

*Cran.* *She* shall be, to the happiness of England,  
An aged princess: many days shall see her,  
And yet no day without a deed to crown it.  
Wou'd I had known no more! but she *must die*,  
She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin, &c."

The lines between crotchets are those supposed to have been inserted by the author after the accession of king James.  
circumstances.

circumstances. Whereas the prediction, as it stands at present, is quite general, and such as might, without any hazard of error, have been pronounced in the life-time of her majesty; for the principal facts that it foretells are, that she should die aged, and a virgin. Of the former, supposing this piece to have been written in 1601, the author was sufficiently secure; for she was then near seventy years old. The latter may, perhaps, be thought too delicate a subject, to have been mentioned while she was yet living. But, we may presume, it was far from being an ungrateful topick; for very early after her accession to the throne, she appears to have been proud of her maiden character; declaring, that she was *wedded* to her people, and that she desired no other inscription on her tomb, than—*Here lyeth Elizabeth, who reigned and died a VIRGIN* \*. Besides, if Shakspeare knew, as probably most people at that time did, that she became very solicitous about the reputation of virginity, when her title to it was at least equivocal, this would be an additional inducement to him to compliment her on that head.

5. Granting that the *latter part* of the panegyrick on Elizabeth implies that she was dead when it was composed, it would not prove that this play was written in the time of king James; for *these latter lines* in praise of the queen, as well as the whole of the compliment to the king, might have been added after his

\* Camden, 27. Melvil, 49.



accession to the throne, in order to bring the speaker back to the object immediately before him, the infant Elizabeth. And this Mr. Theobald conjectured to have been the case. I do not, however, see any necessity for this supposition; as there is nothing, in my apprehension, contained in any of the lines, in praise of the queen, inconsistent with the idea of the whole of the panegyrick on her having been composed in her life-time.

In further confirmation of what has been here advanced, to shew that this play was probably written while queen Elizabeth was yet alive, it may be observed (to use the words of an anonymous writer\*), that "Shakspeare has cast the disagreeable parts of her *father's* character as much into shade as possible; that he has represented him as greatly displeased with the grievances of his subjects, and ordering them to be relieved; tender and obliging (in the early part of the play) to his queen; grateful to the cardinal; and, in the case of Cranmer, capable of distinguishing and rewarding true merit." "He has exerted (adds the same author) an equal degree of complaisance, by the amiable lights in which he has shewn the *mother* of Elizabeth. Anne Bullen is represented as affected with the most tender concern for the sufferings of her mistress, queen Catharine; receiving the honour the king confers on her, by making her marchioness of Pembroke, with a graceful humility; and more

\* The author of *Shakspeare illustrated*.



anxious to conceal her advancement from the queen, lest it should aggravate her sorrows, than solicitous to penetrate into the meaning of so extraordinary a favour, or of indulging herself in the flattering prospect of future royalty."

It is unnecessary to quote particular passages in support of these assertions; but the following lines, which are spoken of Anne Boleyn by the Lord Chamberlain, appear to me so evidently calculated for the ear of Elizabeth (to whom such incense was by no means displeasing), that I cannot forbear to transcribe them:—

—"I have perused her well;  
 "Beauty and honour are in her so mingled,  
 "That they have caught the king: *and who knows yet,*  
 "*But from this lady may proceed a gem,*  
 "*To lighten all this isle."*

The Globe play-house, we are told by the continuator of Stowe's Chronicle, was burnt down on St. Peter's day, in the year 1613, while the play of *King Henry VIII.* was exhibiting. Sir Henry Wotton (as Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed) says, in one of his letters, that this accident happened during the exhibition of a *new* play, called *All is True*; which, however, appears both from Sir Henry's minute description of the piece, and from the account given by Stowe's continuator, to have been our author's play of *King Henry VIII.* If, indeed, Sir H. Wotton was accurate

in calling it a *new* play, all the foregoing reasoning on this subject would be at once overthrown; and this piece, instead of being ascribed to 1601, should have been placed twelve years later. But I strongly suspect that the only novelty attending this play, in the year 1613, was its title, decorations, and, perhaps, the prologue and epilogue. The Elector Palatine was in London in that year; and it appears from the MS. register of lord Harrington, treasurer of the chambers to King James I. that many of our author's plays were then exhibited for the entertainment of him and the princess Elizabeth. By the same register we learn, that the titles of many of them were changed \* in that year. Princes are fond of opportunities to display their magnificence before strangers of distinction; and James, who, on his arrival here, must have been dazzled by a splendour foreign to the poverty of his native kingdom, might have been peculiarly ambitious to exhibit before his son-in-law the mimic pomp of an English coronation †. *King Henry VIII.* therefore, after

\* Thus *Henry IV. P. I.* was called *Hotspur*; *Henry IV. P. II.* or *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, was exhibited under the name of *Sir John Falstaff*; *Much Ado about Nothing* was new-named *Benedict and Beatrix*; and *Julius Caesar* seems to have been represented under the title of *Caesar's Tragedy*.

† The Prince Palatine was not present at the representation of *King Henry VIII.* on the 30th of June, O. S. when the Globe playhouse was burnt down, having left England

some

after having lain by for some years unacted, on account of the costliness of the exhibition, might have been revived in 1613, under the title of *All is True*, with new decorations, and a new prologue and epilogue. Mr. Tyrwhitt observes, that the prologue has two or three direct references to this title; a circumstance which authorises us to conclude, almost with certainty, that it was an occasional production, written some years after the composition of the play. *King Henry VIII.* not being then published, the fallacy of calling it a new play on its revival, was not easily detected.

Dr. Johnson long since suspected, from the contemptuous manner in which "*the noise of targets, and the fellow in a long motley coat,*" or, in other words, most of our author's plays, are spoken of in this prologue, that it was not the composition of Shakspeare, but written after his departure from the stage, on some accidental revival of *King Henry VIII.* by B. Jonson, whose style it seemed to him to resemble\*.

Dr.

some time before. But the play might have been revived for his entertainment in the beginning of the year 1613; and might have been occasionally represented afterwards.

\* In support of this conjecture it may be observed, that Ben Jonson has in many places endeavoured to ridicule our author, for representing battles on the stage. So, in his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*:

Dr. Farmer is of the same opinion, and thinks he sees something of Jonson's hand, here and there, in the dialogue also. After our author's retirement to the country, Jonson was perhaps employed to give a novelty

—" Yet ours for want hath not so lov'd the stage,  
As he dare serve the *ill customs* of the age,  
Or purchase your delight at such a rate,  
As, for it, he himself must justly hate ;  
To make, &c. —————

————— or with three rusty swords,  
*And help of some few foot and half-foot words,*  
*Fight over York and Lancaster's long jars,*  
*And in the tyring-house bring wounds to scars."*

Again, in his *Silent Woman*, Act IV. Sc. iv.

" Nay, I would sit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and *target*."

We are told, in the memoirs of Ben Jonson's life, that he went to France in the year 1613. But at the time of the revival of *King Henry VIII.* he either had not left England, or was then returned ; for he was a spectator of the fire which happened at the Globe theatre during the representation of that piece.

It may, perhaps, seem extraordinary, that he should have presumed to prefix this covert censure of Shakspeare to one of his own plays. But he appears to have eagerly embraced every opportunity of depreciating him. This occasional prologue (whoever was the writer of it) confirms the tradition handed down by Rowe, that our author retired from the stage about three years before his death.

Had

novelty to the piece by a new title and prologue, and to furnish the managers of the Globe with a description of the coronation ceremony, and of those other decorations with which, from his connection with

Had he been at that time joined with Heminge and Burbage in the management of the Globe theatre, he scarcely would have suffered the lines, above alluded to, to have been spoken. In lord Harrington's account of the money disbursed for the plays that were exhibited by his Majesty's servants, in the year 1613, before the Elector Palatine, all the payments are said to have been made to "*John Heminge*, for himself and the rest of his fellows;" from which we may conclude that he was then the principal manager. A correspondent, however, of Sir Thomas Puckering's (as I learn from Mr. Tyrwhitt) in a MS. letter preserved in the Museum, and dated in the year 1613, calls the company at the Globe, "*Bourbage's company*."—Shakspeare's name stands before either of these in the licence granted by king James; and, had he not left London before that time, the players at the Globe theatre, I should imagine, would rather have been entitled *his company*.—The burlesque parody on the account of Falstaff's death, which is contained in Fletcher's comedy of *The Captain*, acted in 1613, and the ridicule of Hamlet's celebrated soliloquy, and of Ophelia's death, in his *Scornful Lady*, which was represented about the same time, confirm the tradition, that our author had then retired from the stage, careless of the fate of his writings, inattentive to the illiberal attacks of his contemporaries, and negligent alike of present and posthumous fame.



Inigo Jones, and his attendance at court, he was peculiarly conversant.

The piece appears to have been revived with some degree of splendour; for Sir Henry Wotton gives a very pompous account of the representation. The unlucky accident that happened to the house during the exhibition, was occasioned by discharging some small pieces, called chambers, on king Henry's arrival at cardinal Wolsey's gate at Whitehall, one of which, being injudiciously managed, set fire to the thatched roof of the theatre\*.

The

\* The Globe theatre (as I learn from the MSS. of Mr. Oldys) was thatched with reeds, and had an open area in its centre. This area we may suppose to have been filled by the lowest part of the audience, whom Shakspeare calls the *groundlings*.—*Chambers* are not, like other guns, pointed horizontally, but are discharged as they stand erect on their breeches. The accident may, therefore, be easily accounted for. If these pieces were let off behind the scenes, the paper or wadding, with which their charges were confined, would reach the thatch on the inside; or, if fixed without the walls, it might have been carried by the wind to the top of the roof.

This accident is alluded to in the following lines of Ben Jonson's *Execration upon Vulcan*; from which it appears, that he was at the Globe playhouse when it was burnt, a circumstance which, in some measure, strengthens the conjecture that he was employed on the revival of *King Henry VIII.* for this was not the theatre at which his pieces were usually represented:

“ Well

The play, thus revived and new-named, was probably called, in the bills of that time, a *new* play; which might have led Sir Henry Wotton to describe it as such. And thus his account may be reconciled with that of the other contemporary writers, as well as with those arguments which have been here urged

- " Well fare the wise men yet on the Bank-side,  
 " My friends, the watermen! they could provide  
 " Against thy fury, when, to serve their needs,  
 " They made a Vulcan of a sheaf of reeds;  
 " Whom they durst handle in their holy-day coats,  
 " And safely trust to dress, not burn their boats.  
 " But O those reeds! thy mere disdain of them  
 " Made thee beget that cruel stratagem  
 " (Which some are pleas'd to style but thy mad prank)  
 " Against *the Globe*, the glory of *the Bank*:  
 " Which, though it were the fort of the whole parish,  
 " Flank'd with a ditch, and forc'd out of a marish,  
 " *I saw* with two poor *chambers* taken in,  
 " And raz'd; ere thought could urge this might have been.  
 " See the world's ruins! nothing but the piles  
 " Left, and wit since to cover it with tiles.  
 " The brethren, they straight nois'd it out for news,  
 " 'Twas verily some relick of the stews,  
 " And this a sparkle of that fire let loose,  
 " That was lock'd up in the Winchestrian goose,  
 " Bred on *the Bank* in time of popery,  
 " When Venus there maintain'd her mystery.  
 " But others fell, with that conceit, by the ears,  
 " And cried, it was a threatening to the bears,  
 " And that accursed ground, *the Paris garden, &c.*"

in support of the early date of *King Henry VIII.* Every thing has been fully stated on each side of the question—The reader must judge.

Mr. Roderick, in his notes on our author (appended to Mr. Edwards's *Canons of Criticism*), takes notice of some peculiarities in the metre of the play before us; viz. "*that there are many more verses in it than in any other, which end with a redundant syllable*"—"very near two to one"—and that "*the cæsura, or pauses of the verse, are full as remarkable.*" The redundancy, &c. observed by this critick, Mr. Steevens thinks (a remark which, having omitted to introduce in its proper place, he desires me to insert here), "was rather the effect of chance, than of design in the author; and might have arisen either from the negligence of Shakspeare, who in this play has borrowed whole scenes and speeches from Holinshed, whose words he was probably in too much haste to compress into versification strictly regular and harmonious; or from the interpolations of Ben Jonson, whose hand Dr. Farmer thinks he occasionally perceives in the dialogue."

Whether Mr. Roderick's position be well founded, is hardly worth a contest; but the peculiarities which he has animadverted on (if such there be), add probability to the conjecture, that this piece underwent some alterations, after it had passed out of the hands of Shakspeare.

Our author had produced so many plays in the preceding years, that it is not likely that *King Henry VIII.* was written before 1601. It might, perhaps, with equal

equal propriety, be ascribed to 1602, and it is not easy to determine in which of those years it was composed; but it is extremely probable that it was written in one of them. It was not printed till 1623.

A book or poem, called "The Life and Death of Thomas Woolsey Cardinall," which was entered on the books of the Stationers-Company, in the year 1599, perhaps suggested this subject to Shakspeare.

#### 24. *TROILUS AND CRESSIDA*, 1602.

*Troilus and Cressida* was entered at Stationers-Hall, Feb. 7, 1602-3, by J. Roberts, the Printer of *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. It was therefore, probably, written in 1602. It was printed in 1609, with a preface by the editor, who speaks of it as if it had not been then acted. But it is entered in 1602-3, "as acted by my Lord Chamberlen's men." The players at the Globe theatre, to which Shakspeare belonged, were called *the Lord Chamberlain's servants*, till the year 1603. In that year they obtained a licence for their exhibitions from king James; and from that time they bore the more honourable appellation of *his Majesty's servants*. There can, therefore, be little doubt, that the *Troilus and Cressida*\*, which is here entered as acted at Shakspeare's theatre,

\* No other play with this title has come down to us. We have, therefore, a right to conclude, that the play entered in the books of the Stationers-Company was Shakspeare's.

was his play, and was, if not represented, intended to have been represented there.

Perhaps the two discordant accounts, relative to this piece, may be thus reconciled. It might have been performed in 1602 at *court*, by the lord chamberlain's servants (as many plays at that time were), and yet not have been exhibited on the publick stage till some years afterwards. The editor in 1609 only says, "it had never been staled with the *stage*, never clapper-claw'd with the palms of the *vulgar*."

As a further proof of the early appearance of *Troilus and Cressida*, it may be observed, that an incident in it seems to be burlesqued in a comedy entitled *Histrionomastix*, which, though not printed till 1610, must have been written before the death of queen Elizabeth, who, in the last act of the piece, is shadowed under the character of Astræa; and is spoken of as then living.

In our author's play, when Troilus and Cressida part, he gives her his sleeve; and she, in return, presents him with her glove.

To this circumstance these lines in *Histrionomastix* seem to refer. They are spoken by Troilus and Cressida, who are introduced in an interlude:

*Troi*: "Come, Cressida, my cresset light,  
Thy face doth shine both day and night.  
Behold, behold, *thy garter blue*  
*Thy knight his valiant elbow weares,*  
That, when he shakes his furious speare,

The



The foe in shivering fearful sort

May lay him down in death to snort.

*Cress.* O knight, with valour in thy face,

*Here take my shreene*, weare it for grace;

Within thy helmet put the same,

Therewith to make thy enemies lame."

"Dryden supposed *Troilus and Cressida* to have been one of Shakspeare's earliest performances\*, but has not mentioned on what principles he founded his judgment. Pope, on the other hand, thought it one of his last; grounding his opinion not only on the preface by the editor in 1609, but on "the great number of observations, both moral and political, with which this piece is crowded, more than any other of our author's." For my own part, were it not for the entry in the Stationers' books, I should have been led, both by the colour of the writing and by the above-mentioned preface, to class it (though not one of our author's happiest effusions) in 1608, rather than in that year in which it is here placed.

\* The tragedy which I have undertaken to correct was, in all probability, one of his *first endeavours* on the stage.

—Shakspeare (as I hinted) *in the apprenticeship of his writing*, modelled it [the story of Lollus] into that play which is now called by the name of *Troilus and Cressida*."

—Dryden's preface to *Troilus and Cressida*.

25. *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*, 1603.

This play was not registered at Stationers-Hall, nor printed, till 1623. But from two passages in it, which seem intended as a courtly apology for the stately and ungracious demeanour of king James I. on his entry into England, it appears probable that it was written soon after his accession to the throne :

" I'll privily away. I love the people,  
 " But do not like to stage me to their eyes.  
 " Though it do well, I do not relish well  
 " Their loud applause, and aves vehement ;  
 " Nor do I think the man of safe discretion  
 " That does affect it."

*Measure for Measure*, Act I. Sc. i.

Again, Act II. Sc. iv.

—————" So  
 " The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,  
 " Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness  
 " Croud to his presence, where their untaught love  
 " Must needs appear offence \*."

King James was *so much offended* by the *untaught*, and, we may add, undeserved, gratulations of his

\* See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note.

subjects,

subjects, on his entry into England, that he issued a proclamation, forbidding the people to resort to him. —“ Afterwards,” says the historian of his reign, “ in his publick appearances, especially in his sports, the accesses of the people made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with frowns, that we may not say with *curses* \*.”

That *Measure for Measure* was written before 1607, may be fairly concluded from the following passage in a poem published in that year, which we have good ground to believe was copied from a similar thought in this play, as the author, at the end of his piece, professes a personal regard for Shakspeare, and highly praises his *Venus and Adonis* † :

\* Wilson's *History of King James*, ad ann. 1603.

† See the verses alluded to, ante p. 268. note.

This writer does not seem to have been very scrupulous about adopting either the thoughts or expressions of his contemporaries; for in this poem are found two lines taken verbatim from Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, printed four years before *Myrrha the Mother of Adonis*, &c.

“ Night like a masque was enter'd heaven's great hall,

“ With thousand torches ushering the way.”

It appears from B. Jonson's *Silent Woman*, that W. Barksted was an actor, and was employed in the theatre where our author's plays were represented. He might, therefore, have performed a part in *Measure for Measure*, or have seen the copy before it was printed.

" So play the foolish *throngs* with one that *swoons*;

" Come all to *help* him, and so stop the *air*

" By which he should revive."

*Measure for Measure*, Act II. Sc. iv.

" And, like as when some sudden extasie

" Seizeth the nature of a sicklie man;

" When he's discern'd to *swoune*, strait by and by

" Folke to his *helpe* confusedly have ran,

" And seeking with their art to fetch him backe,

" So many *throng* that he the *ayre* doth lacke."

*Myrrha the Mother of Adonis, or Luste's Prodigies*,  
by William Barksted, a poem, 1607.

## 26. CYMBELINE, 1604.

*Cymbeline* was not entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623. It stands the *last* play in the earliest folio edition; but nothing can be collected from thence; for the folio editors manifestly paid no attention to chronological arrangement. Not containing any intrinsick evidence by which its date might be ascertained, it is attributed to this year, chiefly because there is no proof that any other play was written by Shakspeare in 1604. And as in the course of somewhat more than twenty years, he produced, according to some, forty-three, in the opinion of others, thirty-five dramas, we may presume that he was not idle during any one year of that time.

This

This play was perhaps alluded to, in an old comedy, called *The Return from Parnassus* :

"Frame, as well we might, with easy strain,  
 "With far more praise, and, with as little pain,  
 "Stories of love, where 'fore the wond'ring bench  
 "The lisping gallant might enjoy his wench ;  
 "Or make some sire acknowledge his lost son \* ,  
 "Found, when the weary act is almost done."

If the author of this piece had *Cymbeline* in contemplation, it must have been more ancient than it is here supposed ; for from several passages in *The Return from Parnassus*, that comedy appears to have been written before the death of queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March 1603.

Mr. Steevens has observed, that there is a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, which bears a strong resemblance to a speech of Jachimo in *Cymbeline* :

"I hear the tread of people : I am hurt ;  
 "The Gods take part against me : could this boor  
 "Have held me thus, else ?"

*Philaster*, Act IV. Sc. i.

\* In the last act of *Cymbeline*, two sons are found. But the author might have written *son* on account of the rhyme.



" I have bely'd a lady  
 " The princess of this country; and the air of't  
 " Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carle,  
 " A very drudge of nature, have subdu'd me  
 " In my profession?"

*Cymbeline*, Act V. Sc. ii.

*Philaster* is supposed to have appeared on the stage about 1609: being mentioned by John Davies of Hereford, in his *Epigrams*, which have no date, but were printed, according to Oldys, in or about that year\*.

One edition of the tract called *Westward for Smelts*, from which part of the fable of *Cymbeline* is borrowed, was published in 1603.

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### 27. KING LEAR, 1605.

The tragedy of *King Lear* was entered on the books of the Stationers-Company, Nov. 26, 1607, and is there mentioned to have been played the preceding Christmas, before his Majesty at Whitehall. But this, I conjecture, was not its first exhibition. It seems extremely probable, that its first appearance was in 1605; in which year the old play of *King Leir*, that had been entered at Stationers-Hall in 1594, was

\* *Additions to Langbaine's Account of the Dramatick Poets.*  
MS.

printed by Simon Stafford, for John Wright, who, we may presume, finding Shakspeare's play successful, hoped to palm the spurious one on the publick for his \*.

Our author's *King Lear* was not published till 1608, Harsnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, from which Shakspeare borrowed some fantastick names of spirits, mentioned in this play, was printed in 1603.

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### 28. *MACBETH*, 1606.

From a book, entitled *Rex Platonicus*, cited by Dr. Farmer, we learn that king James, when he visited Oxford in 1605, was addressed by three students of St. John's College, who personated the three weird sisters, and recited a short dramattick poem, founded on the prediction of those sibyls (as the author calls them) relative to Banquo and Macbeth.

Dr. Farmer is of opinion, that this little piece † preceded Shakspeare's play; a supposition which is strengthened by the silence of the author of *Rex Platonicus*, who, if *Macbeth* had then appeared on the

\* Shakspeare has copied one of the passages in this old play. This he might have done, though we should suppose it not to have been published till after his *King Lear* was written and acted; for the old play had been in possession of the stage for many years before 1605.

† In *Rex Platonicus* it is called *Lusiuncula*.

stage, would probably have mentioned something of it. It should be likewise remembered, that there subsisted at that time a spirit of opposition and rivalry between the regular players and the academicks of the two universities; the latter of whom frequently acted plays both in Latin and English, and seem to have piqued themselves on the superiority of their exhibitions to those of the established theatres \*. Wishing probably to manifest this superiority to the royal pedant, it is not likely that they would choose, for a collegiate interlude, a subject which had already appeared on the public stage, with all the embellishments that the magick hand of Shakspeare could bestow.

This tragedy contains an allusion to the union of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, under one sovereign, and also to the cure of the

\* Ab ejusdem collegii alumnis (qui et cothurno tragico et socco comico principes semper habebantur) *Vertumnus*, comœdia faceta, ad principes exhilarandos exhibetur. *Rex Platonicus*, p. 78.

*Arcadium restauratum* Isiacorum Arcadium lectissimi cecinerunt, unoque opere, principum omniumque spectantium animos immensâ et ultra fidem affecerunt voluptate; simulque patrios ludiones, etsi exercitatissimos, quantum intersit inter scenam mercenariam & eruditam docuerunt, Ib. p. 228. See also the lines quoted above from *The Return from Parnassus*, and Act IV. Sc. iii. of that piece, which was acted publicly at St. John's-College in Cambridge.

king's

king's-evil by the royal touch \* ; but in what year that pretended power was assumed by king James I. is uncertain. *Macbeth* was not entered in the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

In *The Tragedy of Cæsar and Pompey, or Cæsar's Revenge*, are these lines :

"Why think you, lords, that 'tis *ambition's* spur

"That *pricketh* Cæsar to these high attempts?"

If the author of that play, which was published in 1607, should be thought to have had *Macbeth's* soliloquy in view (which is not unlikely), this circumstance may add some degree of probability to the supposition that this tragedy had appeared before that year:

—————"I have no *spur*

"To *prick* the sides of my intent, but only

"Vaulting *ambition*, which o'er-leaps itself

"And falls at the other"————

At the time when *Macbeth* is supposed to have been written, the subject, it is probable, was considered as a topick the most likely to conciliate the favour of the court. In the additions to *Warner's Albion's England*, which were first printed in 1606, the story of "*The Three Fairies, or Weird Elves*," as he calls them, is shortly told, and king James's descent from Banquo carefully deduced.

\* *Macbeth*, Act IV. Sc. i. ii.

Ben Jonson, a few years afterwards, paid his court to his Majesty by his *Masque of Queens*\*, presented at Whitehall, February 12, 1609; in which he has given a minute detail of all the magick rites that are recorded by king James in his book of *Dæmonologie*, or by any other author ancient or modern.

Mr. Steevens has lately discovered a MS. play, entitled *THE WITCH*, written by Thomas Middleton†, which renders it questionable, whether Shakspeare was not indebted to that author for the first hint of the magick introduced in this tragedy. The reader will find an account of this single curiosity in the notes.

\* Mr. Upton was of opinion that this masque preceded *Macbeth*. But the only ground that he states for this conjecture, is, "that Jonson's pride would not suffer him to borrow from Shakspeare, though he stole from the ancients."

† In an advertisement prefixed to an edition of *A Mad World my Masters*, a comedy by Thomas Middleton, 1640, the printer says, that the author was "long since dead." Middleton probably died soon after the year 1626. He was chronologer to the city of London, and it does not appear that any masque or pageant, in honour of the Lord-Mayor, was set forth by him after that year\*. From the dates of his printed plays, and from the ensuing verses on

\* *The Triumph of Health and Prosperity at the Inauguration of the most worthy Brother, the Right Hon. Cuthbert Hasket, draper; composed by Thomas Middleton, draper, 1626, 4to.*

his



Note\*.—To the observations of Mr. Steevens I have only to add, that the songs, beginning, *Come away, &c.* and *Black spirits, &c.* being found at full length in

his last performance, by Sir William Lower, we may conclude, that he was as early a writer, and at least as old, as Shakspeare :

“ *Tom Middleton* his numerous issue brings,

“ And his last muse delights us when she sings :

“ His halting age a pleasure doth impart,

“ And his white locks shew master of his art.”

The following dramattick pieces, by Middleton, appear to have been published in his life-time.—*Your Five Gallants*, no date.—*Blunt Master Constable, or the Spaniard's Night Walke*, 1602.—*Michaelmas Term*, 1607.—*The Phoenix*, 1607.—*The Family of Love*, 1608.—*A Trick to catch the Old One*, 1608.—*A Mad World my Masters*, 1608.—*The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse*, 1611.—*Fair Quarrel*, 1617.—*A Chaste Maid of Cheapside*, 1620.—*A Game at Chesse*, 1625.—Most of his other plays were printed, about thirty years after his death, by Kirkman and other booksellers, into whose hands his manuscripts fell.

\* In a former note on this tragedy, I have said that the original edition contains only the two first words of the song in the 4th act, beginning *Black spirits, &c.* but have lately discovered the entire stanza in an unpublished dramattick piece, viz. “ A Tragi-Coomodie called *THE WITCH*; long since acted by his Majesties Servants at the Black Friars; written by *Tho. Middleton*.” The song is there called—“ A charme-song, about a vessel.” The other

in *The Witch*, while only the two first words of them are printed in *Macbeth*, favour the supposition that Middleton's

other song omitted in the 5th scene of the third act of *Macbeth*, together with the imperfect couplet there, may likewise be found, as follows, in Middleton's performance.

—The *Hecate* of *Shakspeare*, says:—

“ I am for the air, &c.”

The *Hecate* of Middleton (who like the former is summoned away by aerial spirits) has the same declaration in almost the same words:—“ I am for aloft, &c.

“ Song.] Come away, come away: } in the aire.

“ Heecat, Heecat, come away.

“ Hec. I come, I come, I come,

“ With all the speed I may,

“ With all the speed I may.

“ Wher's Stadlin?

“ Heere.] in the aire.

“ Wher's Puckle?

“ Heere.] in the aire.

“ And Hoppo too, and Hellwaine too,

“ We lack but you, we lack but you: } in the aire.

“ Come away, make up the count.

“ Hec. I will but 'noynt, and then I mount,

“ A spirit like { There's one comes downe to fetch  
his dues,  
a cat descends { A kisse, a coll, a sip of blood :  
And why thou staist so long

“ I muse, I muse,

“ Since the aire's so sweet and good.

“ Hec.

Middleton's piece preceded that of Shakspeare; the latter, it should seem, thinking it unnecessary to set down verses which were probably well known, and perhaps then in the possession of the managers of the Globe

"*Hec.* Oh; art thou come?"

"What newes, what newes?"

"All goes still to our delight,

"Either come, or els

Refuse, refuse.

} *above.*

"*Hec.*] Now I am furnish'd for the flight.

"*Fire.*] Hark, hark, the catt sings a brave treble in her owne language.

"*Hec. going up.* Now I goe, now I flie,

"*Malkin* my sweete spirit and I,

"Oh what a daintie pleasure 'tis

"To ride in the aire,

"When the moone shines faire,

"And sing, and daunce, and toy and kiss!

"Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,

"Over seas, our mistris' fountains,

"Over steepe towres and turrets,

"We fly by night 'amongst troopes of spiritts.

"No ring of bells to our eares sounds,

"No howles of woolves, no yelpes of hounds;

"No, not the noyse of waters'-breache,

"Or cannons' throat, our height can reache.

"No ring of bells, &c.] *above.*

"*Fire.*] Well mother, I thank your kindness: you must be gambolling i' th'aire, and leave me to walk here, like a fool and a mortall. *Exit.*

*Finis Actus Tertii,*"

This

Globe theatre. The high reputation of Shakspeare's performances (to mention a circumstance which in the course

This *Fire-stone*, who occasionally interposes in the course of the dialogue, is called, in the list of Persons Represented—"The *Clowne* and *Heccat's* son."

Again, the *Hecate* of *Shakspeare* says to her sisters:—

"I'll charm the *air* to give a sound,

"While you perform your antique round, &c."

[*Musick. The Witches dance and vanish.*

The *Hecate* of *Middleton* says on a similar occasion:

"Come, my sweete sisters, let the *aire* strike our tune,

"Whilst we shew reverence to yond peeping moone."

[*Here they dance and Exeunt.*

In this play, the motives which incline the witches to mischief, their manners, the contents of their cauldron, &c. seem to have more than accidental resemblance to the same particulars in *Macbeth*. The hags of *Middleton*, like the weird sisters of *Shakspeare*, destroy cattle because they have been refused provisions at farm-houses. The owl and the cat (*Grey Malkin*) give them notice when it is time to proceed on their several expeditions.—Thus *Shakspeare's* Witch:—

"Harper cries;—'tis time, 'tis time."

Thus too the *Hecate* of *Middleton*:—

"*Hec.*] Heard you the owle yet?

"*Stad.*] Briefely in the copps.

"*Hec.*] 'Tis high time for us then."

The

course of these observations will be more than once insisted upon) likewise strengthens this conjecture; for it is very improbable, that Middleton, or any other poet of that time, should have ventured into those

The *Hecate* of *Shakspeare*, addressing her sisters, observes, that Macbeth is but a wayward son, who loves for his own ends, not for them. The *Hecate* of Middleton has the same observation, when the youth who has been consulting her retires :

"I know he loves me not, nor there's no hope on't."

Instead of the grease that's sweaten from the murderer's gibbet, and the finger of birth-strangled babe, the witches of Middleton employ "the gristle of a man that hangs after sun-set," (i. e. of a murderer, for all other criminals were anciently cut down before evening) and the "fat of an unbaptized child." They likewise boast of the power to raise tempests that shall blow down trees, overthrow buildings, and occasion shipwreck; and, more particularly, that they can "make miles of woods walk." Here too the Grecian *Hecate* is degraded into a presiding witch, and exercised in superstitions peculiar to our own country. So much for the scenes of enchantment; but even other parts of Middleton's play coincide more than once with that of *Shakspeare*. Lady Macbeth says, in act II.

"\_\_\_\_\_ the surfeited grooms

Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugg'd  
their possets." \_\_\_\_\_



those regions of fiction, in which our author had already expatiated :

—“ Shakspeare's magick could not *copy'd* be,  
Within that circle none durst walk but he.”

Other

So too *Francisca* in the piece of *Middleton* :

“ ——— they're now all at rest,  
“ And Gasper there and all :—List !—fast asleepe ;  
“ He cries it hither. —I must disease you straight,  
Sir ;  
“ For the maide-servants, and the girles o' th' house,  
“ I *spie'd* them lately with a *drowsie posset*,  
“ They will not hear in haste.” ———

And *Francisca*, like lady *Macbeth*, is watching late at night to encourage the perpetration of a murder.

The expression which *Shakspeare* has put into the mouth of *Macbeth*, when he is sufficiently recollected to perceive that the dagger and the blood on it were the creations of his own fancy, —“ There's no such thing !” —is likewise appropriated to *Francisca*, when she undeceives her brother, whose imagination had been equally abused.

From the instances already produced, perhaps the reader would allow, that if *Middleton's* piece preceded *Shakspeare's*, the originality of the magick introduced by the latter might be fairly questioned ; for our author (who, as actor, and manager, had access to unpublished dramatick performances) has so often condescended to receive hints from his contemporaries, that our suspicion of his having been a copyist, in the present instance, might not be without foundation.



by her Majestic's players—The tragedy of *Ninus and Sémiramis*—*Titirus and Galathea*—*Godfrey of Bulloigne*—*The Marriage of Wit and Wisdom*—*The Cradle of Securitie*—*Hit the Nail o' the Head*—*Sir Thomas More*—(Harl. MS. 7368)—*The Isle of Dogs*, by Thomas Nashe—The comedy of *Fidele and Fortunatus*—The famous tragedy of *The De-*  
struction

and that onely, I thinck, hath made her lie so long in an imprisonment'd obscuritie. It is probable, therefore, from these words, as well as from the title-page, that the play was written long\* before the dedication, which seems to have been added soon after the year 1603, when the act of K. James against witches passed into a law. If it be objected, that *THE WITCH* appears from this title-page to have been acted only by his Majesty's servants, let it be remembered that these were the very players, who had been before in the service of the Queen; but *Middleton*, dedicating his work in the time of *James*, speaks of them only as dependants on the reigning prince.

Here too it may be remarked, that the first dramatick piece, in which *Middleton* is known to have had a hand, viz. *The old Law*, was acted in 1599; so that *THE WITCH* might have been composed, if not performed, at an earlier

\* That dramatick pieces were sometimes written long before they were printed, may be proved from the example of Marlowe's *Rich Jew of Malta*, which was entered on the books of the Stationers-Company in the year 1594, but was not published till 1633, as we learn from the preface to it written by *Heywood*. It appears likewise, from the same registers, that several plays were written, that were never published at all.

period

struction of Jerusalem, by Dr. Legge—*The Freeman's Honour*, by William Smith—*Mahomet and Irene the Faire Greek*—*The Play of the Cards*—*Cardenio*—*The Knaves*—*The Knot of Fools*—*Raymond Duke of Lyons*—*The Nobleman*,  
by

period \* than the accession of *James* to the crown; for the belief of witchcraft was sufficiently popular in the preceding reigns. The piece in question might likewise have been neglected through the caprice of players, or retarded till it could be known that *James* would permit such representations (for on his arrival here, both authors and actors, who should have ventured to bring the midnight mirth and jollity of witches on the stage, would probably have been indicted as favourers of magick and enchantment); or, it might have shrunk into obscurity after the appearance of *Macbeth*; or perhaps was forbidden by the command of the king. The witches of *Shakspeare* (exclusive of the flattering circumstance to which their prophecy alludes) are solemn in their operations, and therefore behaved in conformity to his Majesty's own opinions. On the contrary, the hags of *Middleton* are ludicrous in their conduct, and lessen, by ridiculous combinations of images, the solemnity of that magick in which our sceptered persecutor of old women most reverently and potently believed.

The conclusion to *Middleton's* dedication has likewise a degree of singularity that deserves notice.—“For your

\* The spelling in the MS. is sometimes more antiquated than any to be met with in the printed copies of *Shakspeare*, as the following instances may prove:—*Byn* for *been*—*solempnely* for *solemnly*—*dampnation* for *damnation*—*quight* for *quite*—*grizzle* for *gristle*—*doa* for *doe*—*ollyff* for *olive*, &c.

by Cyril Tounour—[the five last acted in the year 1613];—*The honoured Loves*—*The Parliament of Love*—  
and

sake alone, she hath thus conjur'd herself abroad; and beares no other charmes about her, but what may tend to your recreation; nor no other spell, but to possess you with a belief, that as she, so he, that *first* taught her to enchant, will alwaies be, &c."—"He that taught her to enchant," would have sufficiently expressed the obvious meaning of the writer, without aid from the word *first*, which seems to imply a covert censure on some person who had engaged his *Hecate* in a *secondary* course of witchcraft.

The reader must have inferred from the specimen of incantation already given, that this MS. play (which was purchased by Major Pearson out of the collection of one Griffin, a player, and is in all probability the presentation copy) had indubitably passed through the hands of Sir William Davenant; for almost all the additions which he pretends to have made to the scenes of witchcraft in *Macbeth* (together with the names of the supplemental agents) are adopted from *Middleton*. It was not the interest therefore, of Sir William, that this piece should ever appear in print: but time, that makes important discoveries, has likewise brought his petty plagiarism to light\*.

\* Sir William Davenant might likewise have formed his play of *Albovine King of Lombardy* on some of the tragick scenes in this unpublished piece by Middleton. Yet the chief circumstances on which they are both founded occur in the fourth volume of the *Histoires Tragiques*, &c. par François de Belle forest, 1580, p. 297, and at the beginning of Machiavel's *Florentine History*. STEEVENS.

I should



and *Nonsuch*, a comedy; all by William Rowley;—*The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, by the author of *The Return from Parnassus*—*Believe as you List*, by Massinger—*The Pirate*, by Davenport—*Rosania, or Love's Victory*, a comedy by Shirley (some of whose plays were extant in MS. in Langbaine's time);—*The Twins*, a tragedy, acted in 1613—*Tancredo*, a tragedy, by Sir Henry Wotton—*Demetrius and Marsina, or The Imperial Impostor and unhappy Heroine*, a tragedy—*The Tyrant*, a tragedy—*The Queen of Corsica*—*The Bugbears*—*The Second Maid's Tragedy*—*Timon*, a comedy—*Catiline's Conspiracy*, a tragedy; and *Captain Mario*, a comedy, both by Stephen Gosson;—*The True Historie of George Scanderbeg*, as played by the righthonourable the Earl of Oxenford's servants—*Jane Shore*—*The Bold Beau-champs*—*The Second Part of Sir John Oldecastle*—*The General*—*The Toy*—*The Tell-Tale\**, a comedy—*The Woman's Plot*, *The Woman's too hard for Him* [both

I should remark, that Sir W. D. has corrupted several words as well as proper names in the songs, &c. but it were needless to particularize his mistakes, as this entire tragi-comedy will hereafter be published for the satisfaction of the curious and intelligent readers of *Shakspeare*.

STEEVENS.

\* The persons represented in this play (which is in my possession) are—Duke, Fidelio, Aspero, Hortensio, Borgias, Picentio, Count Gismond, Fernese, Bentivoglio, Cosmo, Julio, Captain, Lieutenant, Ancient, two Doctors, an Ambassador, Victoria, Elinor, Isabel, Lesbia.—Scene Florence.

acted

acted at court in 1621];—*The Love-Sick Maid* [acted at court in 1629];—*Fulgius and Lucretia*—*The Fool Transformed*, a comedy—*The History of Lewis the Eleventh, King of France*, a tragi-comedy—*The Chaste Woman against her Will*, a comedy—*The Tooth-Drawer*, a comedy—*Honour in the End*, a comedy—*The History of Don Quixote, or the Knight of the Ill-favoured Countenance*, a comedy—*The Fair Spanish Captive*, a tragi-comedy—*The tragedy of Heildebrand*—*Love yields to Honour*—*The Noble Friend*, &c. &c. Soon after the Restoration, one Kirkman, a bookseller, printed many dramattick pieces that had remained unpublished for more than sixty years; and, in an advertisement subjoined to "*A true, perfect, and exact catalogue of all the comedies, tragedies, &c. that were ever yet printed and published, till this present year 1671,*" he says, that although there were, at that time, but eight hundred and six plays in print, yet many more had been written and acted, and that "he himself had some quantity in manuscript."—The resemblance between *Macbeth* and this newly discovered piece by Middleton naturally suggests a wish, that if any of the unpublished plays, above enumerated, be yet in being (besides *Timon*, *Sir Thomas More*, and *the Second Maid's Tragedy*, which are known to be extant), their possessors would condescend to examine them with attention; as hence, perhaps, new lights might be thrown on others of our author's plays.

## 29. THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, 1606.

*The Taming of a Shrew*, which, together with *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Love's Labour Lost*, was entered at Stationers-Hall, by Nich. Ling, January 22, 1606-7, was not, I believe, Shakspeare's play, but the old comedy of the same name, on which our author's piece was manifestly formed. Nich. Ling never printed either *Romeo and Juliet*, or *Love's Labour Lost*; though in the books of the Stationers-Company they were entered by him. The *old Taming of a Shrew*, which had been originally entered in 1594, and perhaps soon afterwards printed\*, was republished in 1607, by Nich. Ling. As it bore the same title with Shakspeare's play (*which was not printed till 1623*), the hope of getting a sale for it, under the shelter of a celebrated name, was probably the inducement to issue it out at that time: and its publication *then* gives weight to the supposition that Shakspeare's play was written and first acted in the latter end of the year 1606. It was entered by John Smythwick, November 19, 1607; from which circumstance,

\* From a passage in a tract written by Sir John Harrington, entitled *The Metamorphoses of Ajax*, 1596; this old play appears to have been printed before that year, though no edition of so early a date has hitherto been discovered. "Read the booke of *Taming a Shrew*, which hath made a number of us so perfect, that now every one can rule a shrew in our country, save he that hath hir."

we

we may conclude, that he had procured a copy of it, and had then thoughts of publishing it. It was not, however, printed by him till 1631, eight years after it had appeared in the edition of the players in folio.

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30. *JULIUS CÆSAR*, 1607.

A tragedy on the subject, and with the title of *Julius Cæsar*, written by Mr. William Alexander, who was afterwards Earl of Sterline, was printed in the year 1607. This, I imagine, was prior to our author's performance. Shakspeare, we know, formed seven or eight plays on fables that had been unsuccessfully managed by other poets\*; but no contemporary writer was daring enough to enter the lists with him in his life-time, or to model into a drama a subject that had already employed his pen; and it is not likely that Lord Sterline, who was then a very young man, and had scarcely unlearned the Scottish idiom, should have been more hardy than any other poet of that age.

I am aware, it may be objected, that this writer might have formed a drama on this story, not knowing that Shakspeare had previously composed the tragedy of *Julius Cæsar*; and that, therefore, the publi-

\* See a note on *Julius Cæsar*, Act I. Sc. i. in which they are enumerated,

cation of Mr. Alexander's play in 1607 is no proof that our author's performance did not then exist.— In answer to this objection, it may, perhaps, be sufficient to observe, that Mr. Alexander had, before that year, very wisely left the bleak fields of Menstrie in Clackmananshire, for a warmer and more courtly residence in London, having been appointed gentleman of the privy chamber to prince Henry, in which situation his literary curiosity must have been gratified by the earliest notice of the productions of his brother dramatists.

Lord Sterline's *Julius Caesar*, though not printed till 1607, might have been written a year or two before ; and perhaps its publication in that year was in consequence of our author's play on the same subject being then first exhibited. The same observation may be made with respect to an anonymous performance, called *The Tragedie of Casar and Pompey, or Casar's Revenge*\*, which was likewise printed in 1607. The subject of that piece is the defeat of Pompey at Pharsalia, the death of Julius, and the final overthrow of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi. The attention of the town being, perhaps, drawn to the history of the *hook-nosed fellow of Rome*, by the exhibition of our au-

\* This play, as appears by the title-page, was privately acted by the students of Trinity-College in Oxford. In the running title it is called *The Tragedy of Julius Casar*; perhaps the better to impose it on the publick for the performance of Shakspeare.



thor's *Julius Caesar*, the booksellers, who printed these two plays, might have flattered themselves with the hope of an expeditious sale for them at that time, especially as Shakspeare's play was not then published.

We have certain proof that *Antony and Cleopatra* was composed before the middle of the year 1608. An attentive review of that play and *Julius Caesar* will, I think, lead us to conclude that this latter was first written\*. Not to insist on the chronology of the story, which would naturally suggest this subject to our author before the other, in *Julius Caesar* Shakspeare does

\* The following passages in *Antony and Cleopatra* (and others of the same kind may perhaps be found) seem to me to discover such a knowledge of the appropriated characters of the persons exhibited in *Julius Caesar*, and of the events there dilated and enlarged upon, as Shakspeare would necessarily have acquired from having previously written a play on that subject:

"*Pompey*. — I do not know

"Wherefore my father should revengers want,

"Having a son and friends, since *Julius Caesar*,

"Who at Philippi the good *Brutus* ghosted,

"There saw you labouring for him. What was't

"That mov'd pale *Cassius* to conspire? And what

"Made all-honour'd, honest, Roman *Brutus*,

"With the arm'd rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,

"To drench the capitol, but that they would

"Have one man but a man?"

does not seem to have been thoroughly possessed of Antony's character. . He has, indeed, marked one or two of the striking features of it; but Antony is not fully delineated till he appears in that play which takes its name from him and Cleopatra. The rough sketch would naturally precede the finished picture.

From a passage in the comedy of *Every Woman in her Humour*, which was printed in 1609, we learn, that a droll on the subject of Julius Cæsar had been exhibited before that year. "I have seen (says one of the personages in that comedy), *The City of Nineveh*, and *Julius Cæsar*, acted by mammetts." Most of our ancient drolls and puppet-shews are known to have been regular abridgments of celebrated plays, or particular scenes of them only. It does not appear that lord Sterline's *Julius Cæsar* was ever celebrated, or even acted; neither that nor his other plays being at all calculated for dramattick representation. On the other hand, we know that Shakspeare's *Julius*

So, in another place,

"When Antony found Julius Cæsar dead,  
 "He cry'd almost to roaring; and he wept,  
 "When at Philippi he found Brutus slain."

Again,

"Ant. He at Philippi kept  
 "His sword ev'n like a dancer, while I struck  
 "The lean and wrinkled Cassius; and 'twas I  
 "That the mad Brutus ended."

*Cæsar* was a very popular piece; Digges, a contemporary writer, having, in his commendatory verses on our author's works, particularly alluded to it, as one of his most applauded performances \*. The droll here mentioned was, therefore, probably formed out of Shakspeare's play: and we may presume that it had been in possession of the stage at least a year or two, before it was exhibited in this degraded form. Though the term *mammets*, in the passage above quoted, should be considered as contemptuously applied to the children of Paul's, or those of the Chapel † (an interpretation which it will com-  
monly enough admit), the argument with respect to the date of *Julius Cæsar* will still remain in its full force.

In the prologue to *The False One*, by Beaumont and

\* "Nor fire nor cank'ring age, as Naso said

"Of his, thy wit-fraught book shall once invade:

"Nor shall I e'er believe or think thee dead,

"(Though miss'd) until our bankrout stage be sped

"(Impossible!) with some new strain, to outdo

"Passions of *Juliet* and her *Romeo*;

"Or till I hear a scene more nobly take

"Than when thy half-sword parlying Romans spake."

Verses by L. Digges, prefixed to the first edition of  
our author's plays, in 1623.

† By a similar figure these children are, in *Hamlet*, called  
"little Exases."

Fletcher, this play is alluded to\*; but in what year that tragedy was written, is unknown.

If the date of *The Maid's Tragedy*, by the same authors, were ascertained, it might throw some light on the present inquiry; the quarreling scene between Melantius and his friend being manifestly copied from a similar scene in *Julius Cæsar*. Dryden mentions a tradition (which he might have received from Sir William D'Avenant) that *Philaster* was the first play that brought Beaumont and Fletcher into reputation. That play, as has been already mentioned, was acted about the year 1609. We may therefore presume that *The Maid's Tragedy* did not appear before that year; for we cannot suppose it to have been one of the unsuccessful pieces that preceded *Philaster*. That *The Maid's Tragedy* was written before 1611, is ascertained by a MS. play, now extant, entitled *The SECOND Maid's Tragedy*, which was licensed by Sir

\* " New titles warrant not a play for new,  
 " The subject being old; and 'tis as true,  
 " Fresh and neat matter may with ease be fram'd  
 " Out of their stories that have oft' been nam'd  
 " With glory on the stage. What borrows he  
 " From him that wrought old Priam's tragedy,  
 " That writes his love for Hecuba? Sure to tell  
 " Of Cæsar's amorous heats, and how he fell  
 " In the Capitol, can never be the same  
 " To the judicious."

Prologue to the *False One*.

George Buck, on the 31st of October 1611. I believe it never was printed\*.

If, therefore, we fix the date of the original *Maid's Tragedy* in 1610, it agrees sufficiently well with that here assigned to *Julius Caesar*.

It appears by the papers of the late Mr. George Vertue, that a play called *Cesar's Tragedy* was acted at court before the 10th of April, in the year 1613. This was probably Shakspeare's *Julius Caesar*, it being much the fashion at that time to alter the titles of his plays.

### 31. *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, 1608.

*Antony and Cleopatra* was entered on the Stationers' books, May 2, 1608; but was not printed till 1623.

In Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, Act IV. Sc. iv. 1609, this play seems to be alluded to:

"*Morose*. Nay, I would sit out a play that were nothing but *fights at sea*, drum, trumpet, and target."

### 32. *CORIOLANUS*, 1609,

\* This tragedy (as I learn from a MS. of Mr. Oldys) was formerly in the possession of John Warburton, Esq. Somerset Herald. It had no author's name to it when it was licensed, but was afterwards ascribed to George Chapman, whose name is erased by another hand, and that of *Shakspeare* inserted.

### 33. *TIMON*



33. *TIMON of ATHENS*, 1610.

These two plays, which were neither entered in the books of the Stationers-Company, nor printed, till 1623, are classed here only on the principle mentioned in a preceding article \*. Shakspeare, in the course of about twenty years, produced thirty-five dramas. Most of his *other* plays have been attributed, on colourable grounds at least, to *former years*. As we have no proof to ascertain when *these* were written, it seems reasonable to ascribe them to that period, to which we are not led by any particular circumstance to attribute any other of his works; at which, it is supposed, he had not ceased to write; which yet, unless these pieces were then composed, must, for aught that now appears, have been unemployed. When once he had availed himself of North's Plutarch, and had thrown any one of the lives into a dramattick form, he probably found it so easy as to induce him to proceed, till he had exhausted all the subjects which he imagined that book would afford. Hence the four plays of *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, and *Timon*, are supposed to have been written in succession.

Cominius, in the panegyrick which he pronounces on Coriolanus, says,

—“ In the brunt of seventeen battles since  
“ He lurch'd all swords of the garland.”

\* Antc. No. 26.

In Ben Johnson's *Silent Woman*, Act V. Sc. last, we meet (as Mr. Steevens has observed) the same uncommon phraseology: "You have *lurch'd* your friends of the better half of *the garland*."

Whether this was a sneer at Shakspeare, or a new phrase of that day, it adds some degree of probability to the date here assigned to *Coriolanus*; for *The Silent Woman* also made its first appearance in 1609.

There is a MS. comedy now extant, on the subject of *Timon*, which, from the hand-writing and the style, appears to be of the age of Shakspeare. In this piece a steward is introduced, under the name of *Laches*, who, like *Flavius* in that of our author, endeavours to restrain his master's profusion, and faithfully attends him when he is forsaken by all his other followers.—Here too a mock-banquet is given by Timon to his false friends; but, instead of warm water, stones painted like artichokes are served up, which he throws at his guests. From a line in Shakspeare's play, one might be tempted to think that something of this sort was introduced by him; though, through the omission of a marginal direction in the only ancient copy of this piece, it has not been customary, to exhibit it:

"*Second Senator.* Lord Timon's mad.

"*3d. Sen.* I feel it on my bones.

"*4th. Sen.* One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones."

This

This comedy (which is evidently the production of a scholar, many lines of Greek being introduced into it) appears to have been written after Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599), to which it contains a reference ; but I have not discovered the precise time when it was composed. If it were ascertained, it might be some guide to us in fixing the date of our author's *Timon*, which, on the grounds that have been already stated\*, I suppose to have been posterior to this anonymous play.

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### 34. *OTHELLO*, 1611.

Dr. Warburton thinks that there is in this tragedy a satirical allusion to the institution of the order of Baronets, which dignity was created by king James I. in the year 1611 :

—“The hearts of old gave hands,

“But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.”

*Othello*, Act III. Sc. iv.

“Amongst their other prerogatives of honour” (says that commentator), “they [the new-created baronets] had an addition to their paternal arms, of an hand *gules* in an escutcheon *argent*. And we are not to doubt but that this was the *new heraldry* alluded

\* Ante, p. 340. 343, 344.

to by our author; by which he insinuates, *that some then created had hands indeed, but not hearts; that is, money to pay for the creation, but no virtue to purchase the honour.*"

Such is the observation of this critick. But by what chymistry can the sense which he has affixed to this passage be extracted from it? Or is it probable, that Shakspeare, who has more than once condescended to be the encomiast of the unworthy founder of the order of Baronets, who had been personally honoured by a letter from his Majesty, and substantially benefited by the royal licence granted to him and his fellow-comedians, should have been so impolitick as to satirize the king, or to depreciate his new-created dignity?

These lines appear to me to afford an obvious meaning, without supposing them to contain such a multitude of allusions:

*Of old (says Othello) in matrimonial alliances, the heart dilated the union of hands; but our modern junctions are those of hands, not of hearts.*

On every marriage the arms of the wife are united to those of the husband. This circumstance, I believe, it was, suggested *heraldry*, in this place, to our author. I know not whether a heart was ever used as an armorial ensign\*, nor is it, I conceive, for this interpretation, necessary to inquire. It was the office of the herald to *join*, or, to speak technically, to

\* It is, in the arms of Douglas.

quarter the arms of the new-married pair \*. Hence, with his usual licence, Shakspeare uses *heraldry* for *junction*, or *union* in general. Thus, in his *Rape of Lucrece*, the same term is employed to denote that *union* of colours which constitutes a beautiful complexion :

“ This *heraldry* in Lucrece's face was seen,

“ Argued by beauty's red, and virtue's white.”

This passage not affording us any assistance, we are next to consider one in *The Alchymist*, by Ben Jonson, which, if it alluded to an incident in *Othello* (as Mr. Steevens seems to think it does), would ascertain this play to have appeared before 1610, in which year *The Alchymist* was first acted :

“ *Lovewit*. Didst thou hear a cry, say'st thou ?

“ *Neighb*. Yes, Sir, like unto a man that had been strangled an hour, and could not speak.”

But I doubt whether *Othello* was here in Jonson's contemplation. Old Ben generally spoke out ; and if he had intended to sneer at the manner of Desdemona's death, I think, he would have taken care that his meaning should not be miss'd, and would have written — “ like unto a woman,” &c.

This tragedy was not entered on the books of the

\* “ I may *quarter*, coz,” says *Slender*, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. “ You may (replies justice *Shallow*) by *marrying*.”

Stationers.



Stationers-Company till October 6, 1621, nor printed till the following year; but it was acted at court early in the year 1613\*. How long before that time it had appeared, I have not been able to ascertain, either from the play itself, or from any contemporary production. I have, however, persuaded myself that it was one of Shakspeare's latest performances: a supposition, to which the acknowledged excellence of the piece gives some degree of probability. It is here attributed to the year 1611, because Dr. Warburton's comment on the passage above-cited may convince others, though I confess, it does not satisfy me.

*Emilia and Lodovico*, two of the characters in this play, are likewise two of the persons represented in *May-Day*, a comedy by Chapman, first printed in 1611.

### 35. *THE TEMPEST*, 1612.

Though some account of the Bermuda-Islands, which are mentioned in this play, had been published in 1606 (as Dr. Farmer has observed), yet as they were not generally known till Sir George Somers arrived there in 1609, *The Tempest* may be fairly attributed to a period subsequent to that year; especially as it exhibits such strong internal marks of having been a late production.

The entry at Stationers-Hall does not contribute to ascertain the time of its composition; for it appears not

\* MS. Vertue.

on the Stationers' books, nor was it printed till 1623, when it was published with the rest of our author's plays in folio: in which edition, having, I suppose, by mere accident, obtained the first place, it has ever since preserved a station to which indubitably it is not entitled.

As the circumstance from which this piece receives its title, is at an end in the very first scene, and as many other titles, all equally proper, might have occurred to Shakspeare (such as *The Enchanted-Island—The Banished Duke—Ferdinand and Miranda, &c.*) it is possible, that some particular and recent event determined him to call it *The Tempest*. It appears from Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 913, that in the October, November, and December of the year 1612, a dreadful tempest happened in England, "*which did exceeding great damage, with extreame shipwrack throughout the ocean.*" "*There perished (says the historian) above an hundred ships in the space of two houres.*"—Several pamphlets were published on this occasion, decorated with prints of sinking vessels, castles toppling on their warder's heads, the devil overturning steeples, &c. In one of them, the author, describing the appearance of the waves at Dover, says, "*the whole seas appeared like a fiery world, all sparkling red.*" Another of these narratives recounts the escape of Edmond Pet, a sailor; whose preservation appears to have been no less marvellous than that of Trinculo or Stephano; and so great a terror did this tempest create in the minds of the people, that a form of prayer was ordered

ordered on the occasion, which is annexed to one of the publications above mentioned.

There is reason to believe that some of our author's dramas obtained their names from the seasons at which they were produced. It is not very easy to account for the title of *Twelfth Night*, but by supposing it to have been first exhibited in the Christmas holidays\*. Neither the title of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, nor that of *The Winter's Tale*, denotes the season of the action; the events which are the subject of the latter, occurring at the time of sheep-shearing, and the dream, from which the former receives its name, happening on the night preceding May-day.—These titles, therefore, were probably suggested by the season at which the plays were exhibited, to which they belong; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, having, we may presume, been first represented in June, and *The Winter's Tale* in December.

\* It was formerly an established custom to have plays represented at court in the Christmas holidays, and particularly on *Twelfth Night*. Two of Lilly's comedies (*Alexander and Campaspe*, 1591—and *Mydas*, 1592) are said, in their title-pages, to have been *played before the queen's majestie on Twelfth-day at night*; and several of Ben Jonson's masques were presented at White-Hall, on the same festival. Our author's *Love's Labour Lost* was exhibited before queen Elizabeth in the Christmas holidays; and his *King Lear* was acted before king James on St. Stephen's night (the night after Christmas-day).

Perhaps,

Perhaps, then, it may not be thought a very improbable conjecture, that this comedy was written in the summer of 1612, and produced on the stage in the latter-end of that year; and that the author availed himself of a circumstance then fresh in the minds of his audience, by affixing a title to it, which was more likely to excite curiosity than any other that he could have chosen, while at the same time it was sufficiently justified by the subject of the drama.

Mr. Steevens, in his observations on this play, has quoted from the tragedy of *Darius* by the earl of Sterline, first printed in 1603, some lines \* so strongly resembling

- \* "Let greatness of her glassy sceptres vaunt,  
 "Not sceptres, no but reeds, soon bruis'd, soon broken,  
 "And let this worldly pomp our wits enchant,  
 "All fades, and scarcely leaves behind a token.  
 "Those golden palaces, those gorgeous halls,  
 "With furniture superfluously fair,  
 "Those stately courts, those sky-encount'ring walls,  
 "Evanish all like vapours in the air."

*Darius*, Act III. Ed. 1603.

- "These our actors,  
 "As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
 "Are melted into air, into thin air;  
 "And, like the baseless fabrick of this vision,  
 "The cloud-capt tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,  
 "The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

M m

"Yea

resembling a celebrated passage in *The Tempest*, that one author must, I apprehend, have been indebted to the other. Shakspeare, I imagine, borrowed from lord Sterline\*.

Mr. Holt conjectured †, that the masque in the fifth act of this comedy was intended by the poet as a compliment to the Earl of Essex, on his being united in wedlock, in 1611, to lady Frances Howard, to whom he had been contracted some years before ‡. However this might have been, the date, which that commentator has assigned to this play (1614), is certainly too late; for it appears from the MSS. of Mr. Vertue, that the *Tempest* was acted by John Heminge

"Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,

"And like this unsubstantial pageant faded,

"Leave not a rack behind."

*Tempest*, Act IV. Sc. i.

Whether we suppose Shakspeare to have imitated lord Sterline, or lord Sterline to have borrowed from him, the fourth line above quoted from the tragedy of *Darius* renders it highly probable that Shakspeare wrote,

"Leave not a track behind."

\* See a note on *Julius Caesar*, Act I. Sc. i.

† Observations on the *Tempest*, p. 67. Mr. Holt imagined, that lord Essex was united to lady Frances Howard in 1610; but he was mistaken; their union did not take place till the next year.

‡ Jan. 5, 1606—7. The earl continued abroad four years from that time; so that he did not cohabit with his wife till 1611.

and



and the rest of the King's Company, before prince Charles, the lady Elizabeth, and the prince Palatine elector, in the beginning of the year 1613.

The names of *Trinculo* and *Antonio*, two of the characters in this comedy, are likewise found in that of *Albumazar*; which was first printed in 1614, but is supposed by Dryden to have appeared some years before.

### 36. *TWELFTH NIGHT*, 1614.

It has been generally believed, that Shakspeare retired from the theatre, and ceased to write, about three years before he died. The latter supposition must now be considered as extremely doubtful; for Mr. Tyrwhitt, with great probability, conjectures, that *Twelfth Night* was written in 1614: grounding his opinion on an allusion\*, which it seems to contain, to those parliamentary *undertakers*, of whom frequent mention is made in the Journals of the House of Commons for that year †; who were stigmatized with this invidious name, on account of their having *undertaken* to manage the elections of knights and burgesses, in such a manner as to secure a majority in parliament for the court. If this allusion was intended, *Twelfth*

\* "Nay, if you be an *undertaker*, I am for you." See *Twelfth Night*, Act IV. Sc. iii. and the note there.

† Comm. Journ. Vol. I. p. 456, 457, 470.

*Night* was probably our author's last production; and, we may presume, was written after he had retired to Stratford. It is observable, that Mr. Ashley, a member of the House of Commons, in one of the debates on this subject, says, "that the rumour concerning these *undertakers* had spread into the country."

When Shakspeare quitted London and his profession, for the tranquillity of a rural retirement, it is improbable that such an excursive genius should have been immediately reconciled to a state of mental inactivity. It is more natural to conceive, that he should have occasionally bent his thoughts towards the theatre, which his muse had supported, and the interest of his associates whom he had left behind him, to struggle with the capricious vicissitudes of publick taste, and whom, his last Will shews us, he had not forgotten. To the necessity, therefore, of literary amusement to every cultivated mind, or to the dictates of friendship, or to both these incentives, we are, perhaps, indebted for the comedy of *Twelfth Night*; which bears evident marks of having been composed at leisure, as most of the characters that it contains are finished to a higher degree of dramatick perfection, than is discoverable in some of our author's earlier comick performances \*.

\* The comedies particularly alluded to are, *Love's Labour Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Comedy of Errors*.

In the third act of this comedy, *Decker's Westward Hoe* seems to be alluded to. *Westward Hoe* was printed in 1607, and, from the prologue to *Eastward Hoe*, appears to have been acted in 1604, or before.

Maria, in *Twelfth Night*, speaking of Malvolio, says, "he does smile his face into more lines than the new map with the augmentation of the Indies." I have not been able to learn the date of the map here alluded to; but, as it is spoken of as a recent publication, it may, when discovered, serve to ascertain the date of this play more exactly.

The comedy of *What You Will* (the second title of the play now before us), which was entered at Stationers-Hall, August 9, 1607, was probably Marston's play, as it was printed in that year; and it appears to have been the general practice of the booksellers at that time, recently before publication, to enter those plays of which they had procured copies.

*Twelfth Night* was not entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

It has been thought, that Ben Jonson intended to ridicule the conduct of this play, in his *Every Man out of his Humour*, at the end of Act III. Sc. vi. where he makes Mitis say,—“That the argument of his comedy might have been of some other nature, as of a duke to be in love with a countess, and that countess to be in love with the duke's son, and the son in love with the lady's waiting-maid; some such cross

M m i i j      wooing,

wooing, with a clown to their serving-man, better than be thus near and familiarly allied to the time \*.

I doubt, however, whether Jonson had here *Twelfth Night* in contemplation. If an allusion to this comedy were intended, it would ascertain it to have been written before 1599, when *Every Man out of his Humour* was first acted. But Meres does not mention *Twelfth Night* in 1598; nor is there any reason to believe that it then existed.

IF the dates here assigned to our author's plays should not, in every instance, carry with them conviction of their propriety, let it be remembered, that this is a subject on which conviction cannot at this day be obtained; and that the observations, now submitted to the publick, do not pretend to any higher title than that of "AN ATTEMPT to ascertain the chronology of the dramas of Shakspeare."

Should the errors and deficiencies of this essay invite others to deeper and more successful researches, the end proposed by it will be attained: and he who offers the present arrangement of Shakspeare's dramas will be happy to transfer the slender portion of credit that may result from the novelty of his undertaking, to some future claimant, who may be supplied with ampler materials, and endued with a superior degree of antiquarian sagacity.

\* See the first note on *Twelfth Night*, Act I. Sc. i.

To some, he is not unapprized, this inquiry will appear a tedious and barren speculation. But there are many, it is hoped, who think nothing that relates to the brightest ornament of the English nation, wholly uninteresting; who will be gratified by observing, how the genius of our great poet gradually expanded itself, till, like his own Ariel, *it flamed amazement* in every quarter, blazing forth with a lustre that has not hitherto been equalled, and perhaps will never be surpassed.

MALONE.



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A LIST  
OF  
ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS  
FROM  
CLASSICK AUTHORS.

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HOMER.

*TEN Bookes of the Iliades into English out of French,*  
by ARTHUR HALL, Esq. London, imprinted by  
Ralph Newberie, 4to \* ————— 1584

*The Shield of Achilles, from the 18th Book of Homer,*  
by GEORGE CHAPMAN, 4to. London 1596

\* In the first volume of the books of entries belonging to the Stationers-Company is the following:

"Henry Bynneman.] Nov. 1580, lycensed unto him under the wardens' hands tenne bookes of the Iliades of Homer." Again, Nov. 14, 1608, "Seven bookes of Homer's Iliades translated into English by Geo. Chapman," Again, April 8, 1611, "A booke called Homer's Iliades in English, containing 24 Bookes." Again, Nov. 2, 1614, Homer's Odisses, 24 bookes, translated by George Chapman."

Seven

*Seven Books of the Iliades*, by ditto, 4to\*. Lond. 1596

*Ditto* \_\_\_\_\_ 1598

*Fifteen Books of Ditto*, thin folio \_\_\_\_\_ 1600

*The whole Works of Homer*, by ditto, printed for Nath.

Butter. An anonymous correspondent informs me that he has in his possession "a volume containing twelve Books of the Iliad by Chapman; and after them some Sonnets; but the title-page is so mutilated, that neither the date nor printer's name remain" \_\_\_\_\_ no date.

*The Crowne of all Homer's Works, Batrachomymachia*, &c. thin folio, printed by John Bill \_\_\_\_\_ no date †.

*The Strange, Wonderfull, and Bloudy Battell between Frogs and Mise*; paraphrastically done into English Heroicall Verse, by W. F. (i. e. WILLIAM FOWLDES) 4to. \_\_\_\_\_ 1603

# HESIOD.

*The Georgics of Hesiod*, by G. CHAPMAN, 4to. 1618

# MUSÆUS.

*Marloe's Hero and Leander*, with the first Book of Lucan, 4to. \_\_\_\_\_ 1600

\* Meres, in his *Second part of Wit's Commonwealth*, 1598, says, that Chapman is "of good note for his inchoate Homer."

† In the first volume of the entries of the Stationers-Company is the following:

"T. Purfoote.] The Battell of the Frogges and Myce, and certain orations of Isocrates. Jan. 4th, 1579."

There

*There must have been a former Edition\*, as a second Part was published by Henry Petowe* — 1598

*Musæus's Poem of Hero and Leander, imitated by CHRISTOPHER MARLOW, and finished by GEORGE CHAPMAN, 8vo. London* — 1606

### EURIPIDES.

*Jocasta, a Tragedy, from the Phœnissa of Euripides, by GEORGE GASCOIGNE, and Mr. FRANCIS KINWELMERSHE, 4to. London* — 1556

\* This translation, or at least Marlow's part in it, must have been published before 1599, being twice mentioned in Nash's *Lenten Stuff, &c.* which bears that date. "*Leander and Hero, of whom divine Musæus sung, and a diviner muse than him, Kit Marlow.*" Again, "*She sprung after him, and so resigned up her priesthood, and left worke for Musæus and Kit Marlow.*"

Among the entries at Stationers-Hall I find the following made by John Wolfe in 1593, Sept. 8th, "A booke entitled *Hero and Leander*, being an amorous poem devised by Christopher Marlow."

At the same time, "Lucan's first booke of the famous *Cywill Warr betwixt Pompey and Cæsar*. Englished by Christopher Marlow."

Again, in 1597, "A booke in English called *Hero and Leander*."

Again, April 1598, "The seconde Part of *Hero and Leander*, by Henry Petowe." Andrew Harris entered it.

Again, in 1600, "*Hero and Leander* by Marlowe."

In 1614 an entire translation of Lucan was published by Sir Arthur Gorges, and entered as such on the same books.

PLATO.

## PLATO.

*Axiochus*, a Dialogue, attributed to Plato, by EDMUND SPENSER, 4to. \* 1592

## DEMOSTHENES.

*The Three Orations of Demosthenes, chiefe Orator among the Grecians, in Favour of the Olynthians, with those his sower against Philip of Macedon, &c.* by THOMAS WYLLSON, Doctor of the Civill Lawes, 4to. 1570

## ISOCRATES.

*Isocrates's sage Admonition to Demonicus*, by R. NUTT-HALL, 8vo. London 1557, 12mo. and 1585

*Isocrates's Doctrinal of Princes*, by SYR THOMAS ELLIOT, London, 8vo. — 1534

*Isocrates's Orations, entitled Evagoras*, by JEREMIAH WOLFE, 8vo. — — 1581

*Three Orations of moral Instructions, one to Demonicus, and two to Nicocles, King of Salamis, translated from Isocrates*, by THOMAS FORREST, 4to. 1580

## LUCIAN.

*Necromantia, a Dialog of the Poete Lucyen between Menippus and Philonides, for his Fantesye saynyd for a mery Pastyme, in English Verse and Latin-Prose.*

\* This book was entered in May 1592, at Stationers-Hall.

Toxaris,

*Toxaris, or the Friendship of Lucian*, by A. O. Lond.  
8vo. \_\_\_\_\_ 1565

### HERODOTUS.

*The Famous Hystory of Herodotus\**, in nine Bookes, &c.  
by B. R. London \_\_\_\_\_ 1584

N. B. *This Piece contains only the two first Books, viz. the Clio and Euterpe. The Translator says in his Preface, "As these speede, so the rest will follow. 4to.*

### THUCYDIDES.

*The Hystory writtione by Thucydides, &c.* translated out of the Frenche of Claude de Seyssell, Bishop of Marseilles, into the Englishe language, by THO. NICOLLS, Citizeine and Goldsmyth of London, fol. 1550†.

### POLYBIUS.

*Hystories of the most famous and worthy Cronographer, Polybius*, by CHRISTOPHER WATSON, 8vo. 1568  
*This Work consists of extracts only.*

\* Among the entries in the books at Stationers-Hall this appears to be one.

“*John Denham.*] The famous Historye of Herodotus in Englyshe, June 13, 1581.”

† On the Stationers' books in 1607 either this or some other translation is entered, called “The History of Thucydides the Athenian, translated into English.”

### DIODORUS



## DIODORUS SICULUS\*.

*The Hystory of the Successors of Alexander, &c.* out of  
Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch, by THOMAS  
STOCKER. London, 4to. — 1569

## APPIAN.

*An aunciente Historie, &c.* by Appian† of Alexandria,  
translated out of diverse Languages, &c. by W. B.  
4to. London — 1578

## JOSEPHUS.

*Josephus's History, &c.* translated into English, by  
THOMAS LODGE, fol. London, 1602—1609, &c.

## ÆLIAN.

*Ælian's Registre of Hystories*, by ABRAHAM FLEMING,  
4to. — 1576

\* Caxton tells us, that "Skelton had translated *Diodorus Siculus*, the *Epistles of Tulle*, and diverse other Workes;" but I know not that they were ever printed.

† In the first volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers-Company, Feb. 5, 1577, is the following:

"Henry Binneman.] Appianus Alexandrinus of the Romaine Civill Warres."

## HERODIAN.

*The Historie of Herodian, &c.* translated out of Greeke into Latin, by ANGELEUS POLITIANUS, and out of Latin into Englyshe, by NICH. SMYTH. Imprinted at London, by William Coplande, 4to \*.

## PLUTARCH.

*Plutarch's Lives* †, by Sir THOMAS NORTH, from the French of Amyot, Bishop of Auxerre, fol.

1579, 1602, 1603

*Plutarch's Morals*, by Dr. PHILEMON HOLLAND,

1603 †

*Plutarch of the Education of Children*, by Sir THOMAS ELYOTT, 4to.

*The Preceptes of that excellent Clerke and grave Philosopher Plutarque, for the Preservation of Healthe*, 8vo.

1643

\* Oct. 1591, *Herodian in English* was entered at Stationers-Hall by ——— Adams.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers-Company:

"April 1579—Vantrouller—Wright, a booke in Englishe called Plutarch's Lyves."

‡ On the Stationers' books in the year 1600 is the following entry :

"A booke to be translated out of Frenche into Englishe, and so printed, called the Morall Woorkes of Plutarque." Again in 1602. Again in the same year, "The morral worke of Plutarque, being translated out of French into English."

ARISTOTLE.

## ARISTOTLE.

*The Ethiques of Aristotle, &c.* by JOHN WYLKINSON.

Printed by Grafton, Printer to King Edward VI.

8vo. B. L. ————— 1547\*

*The Secrete of Secretes of Aristotle, &c.* translated out of the Frenche, &c. London, 8vo. 1528

*Aristotle's Politiques, &c*†. from the French, by J. D. fol. London ————— 1598

## XENOPHON.

*The eight Bookes of Xenophon, containing the Institution, Schole, and Education of Cyrus, the noble King of Persye, &c.* translated out of Greek into English, by Mr. W. BERCHER, London, 12mo. 1567 & 1569

*Ditto*, by Dr. PHILEMON HOLLAND.

*Xenophon's Treatise of House-hold right*, connyngly translated out of the Greke tongue, &c. by GENTIAN HERVET, &c. 8vo. Lond. 1532, 8vo. 1534,

1544, 8vo. 1573.

\* Of the *Ethicks of Aristotle* some more early translation must have appeared; as Sir Tho. Elyot in his *Boke named the Governour*, 1537, says, "they are to be learned in Greke; for the translations that we have, be but a rude and grosse shadowe of the eloquence and wysdome of Aristotle."

† This translation is entered in the books at Stationers-Hall.

"Adam Islip.] *Aristotle's Politiques* with expositions; to be translated into Englyshe by the Frenche copie, 1598."

*The Arte of Riding from Xenophon, &c.* Lond. 4to. 1584

### · EPICTETUS ·.

*The Manuell of Epictetus*, translated out of Greeke into French, and now into English, &c. Also the Apothegmes, &c. by JAMES SANDFORD. London, 12mo. — — 1567

### EUNAPIUS SARDIANUS†.

*The Lyves of Philosophers and Orators*, from the Greek of Eunapius, 4to. — 1579

### · ACHILLES STATIUS.

*The most delectable and pleasant History of Clitophon and Lucippe*, from the Greek of Achilles Statius, &c. by W. B. 4to. — 1597†

\* In the books of the Stationers-Company, Feb. 12, 1581, Tho. Easte entered Enchiridion in English.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers-Company. "Richard Jones.] The Lives of divers excellent Orators and Philosophers written in Greeke by Enapius of the city of Sardis in Lydia, and translated into Englishe by —."

‡ This book was entered in the same year by Thomas Creede, on the books of the Stationers-Company.

M. ANTO.

## M. ANTONINUS\*.

*The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius, Emperour and eloquent Orator*, 12mo. London ——— 1553

Translated out of French into English, by Sir JOHN BOURCHIER, Knt. &c. &c.

*Other editions of this are in* 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1559, 1586, 1588.

## DIONYSIUS.

*Dionysius's Description of the Worlde.* Englyshed by THOMAS TWINE, 8vo. London ——— 1572

## EUCLID.

*Euclid's Elements of Geometry*, translated into English by RICH. CANDISH, who flourished A. D. 1556

*Euclid's Elements*, Preface by JOHN DEE, Lond. 1570

## HIPPOCRATES.

*The Aphorismes of Hippocrates*, redacted into a certaine Order, and translated by HUMFRIE LLHYD, 8vo.

1585

\* This book is only introduced, that an opportunity may be obtained of excluding it from any future catalogue of translated classicks. It was a fraud of Guevara's. See his article in Bayle. Our countryman Elyott did somewhat of the same kind. He pretended to translate the Actes and Sentences notable, of the Emperōr Alexander Severus (from the Greek of Encolpius). See *Fabricius* and *Tanner's Bibliothec.* &c.

Nn iij

GALEN.



## GALEN.

- Galen's Two Books of Elements*, translated into English  
by J. JONES, 4to. London — 1574  
Third and fourth Books by G. BAKER, 4to. 1579  
*Certaine Workes of Galen*, englyshed by THO. GALE,  
4to. — — 1586

## HELIODORUS.

- The Beginning of Æthiopical History in English Hexameters*,  
by ABRAHAM FRAUNCE, 8vo. London 1591\*  
*Heliodorus's Æthiopic History*, transl. by THO. UNDER-  
DOWN, B. L. 4to. London 1577 and 1587

## VIRGIL.

- The Boke of Eneydos, &c.* by CAXTON, fol. London,  
prose — — 1490  
*The thirteen Bukes of Eneados in Scottish Metir*, by GA-  
WAIN DOUGLAS, 4to. London — 1553  
*Certain Bookes of Virgile's Æneis* † turned into English  
Metir, by the right honourable Lorde HENRY  
Earle of Surrey, 4to. London — 1557

\* A translation of the same book is likewise entered at Stationers-Hall, 1602, and again twice in 1604, for different Printers.

† This is a translation of the second and fourth books into blank verse, and is perhaps the oldest specimen of that metre in the English language.

The

*The first seven Bookes of the Eneidos*, by PHAER, Lond.  
4to. B. L. ————— 1558

*This Translation is in rhyme of fourteen syllables.*

*The nyne first Bookes, &c.* by PHAER, 4to. Lond. 1562

*The thirteene Bookes of Eneidos*, by PHAER and TWYNE,  
4to. London 1584, 1596, 1607, &c.\*

*The first foure Bookes of Virgil's Æneis*, translated into  
English heroic Verse, by RICHARD STANYHURST,  
&c. 12mo †. London ————— 1583

*The Bucolicke of Publius Virgilius Maro, &c.* by ABRA-  
HAM FLEMING, drawn into plaine and familiar  
Englyshe, Verse for Verse, 4to. B. L. 1575

*Virgil's Eclogues and Georgicks*, translated into blank  
Verse, by the same Author, London 1589

*The Lamentation of Corydon for the Love of Alexis*, Verse  
for Verse, out of Latine.

*This is translated into English Hexameters, and printed at  
the end of the Countesse of Pembroke's Iuychurch, 1591.*

By ABRAHAM FRAUNCE.

*Virgil's Culex paraphrased*, by SPENSER. *See his works.*

\* Among the entries in the books of the Stationers-Com-  
pany, is the following. "Tho. Creede,] Virgil's Æneidos  
in Englishe verse, 1595." Again in 1600. Again his  
Bucolicks and Georgicks in the same year.

† The copy, which I have seen, was in 4to. printed at  
Leyden, and was entered as such on the books of the Sta-  
tioners, on the 24th of January 1582.

HORACE.

## HORACE.

*Two Bookes of Horace his Satyres Englyshed, according to the Prescription of St. Hierome, 4to. B. L. Lond.*

1566

*Horace his Arte of Poetrie, Pistles\*, and Satyrs Englyshed, by THOMAS DRANT, 4to. London*

1567

## OVID.

*The fiftene Bookes of Metamorphoseos. In which be contaynid the Fables of Ovid, by WILLIAM CAXTON, Westminster, folio*

1480

*The four first Books of Ovid, translated from the Latin into English Meetre, by ARTHUR GOLDING, Gent. 4to. B. L. London*

1565

*The fiftene Bookes of P. Ovidius Naso, &c. by ARTHUR GOLDING, 4to. Bl. L. London*

1576

*Another in 1575, according to Ames, and another earlier than either in 1567, if we may believe the Date of the Dedication.*

*[A former Edition was in 1572, in Rawlinson's Catalogue.]*

*Ditto* ——— 1587. Do. 1612.

*The pleasant Fable of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis. 8vo. London* ——— 1565

*The Fable of Ovid treating of Narcissus, translated out of Latin into English Mytre, with a Moral thereunto very plesante to rede, 4to. London* 1560

\* There is an entry at Stationers-Hall of the Epistles of Horace in 1591.

The

*The Heroycall Epistles, &c.* set out and translated by  
GEORGE TURBERVILLE, Gent. &c. B. L. 4to.

London \* — 1567, 1569, and 1600

*The three first Bookes of Ovid de Tristibus*, translated into  
English, by THO. CHURCHYARD, 4to. London

1580 †

*Ovid his Invective against Ibis*, translated into English  
Meeter, &c. 12mo. London — 1569 ‡

And 1577, by THOMAS UNDERWOOD.

*Certaine of Ovid's Elegies*, by C. MARLOW §, 12mo.

At Middleburgh — no date.

*All Ovid's Elegies*, three Bookes, by C. M. At Middle-  
burgh, 12mo. Somewhat larger than the preceding

edition. *Ovidius Naso, his Remedy of Love*, tran-  
slated and entituled to the youth of England, 4to.

London — — 1600

\* Among the Stationers' entries I find, in 1594, "A  
book<sup>e</sup> entituled *Oenone and Paris*, wherein is described the  
extremity of love, &c." This may be a translation from  
Ovid.

† This book was entered at Stationers-Hall by Thomas  
Easte, July 1, 1577, and by Thomas Orwin in 1591.

‡ Among the entries in the books of the Stationers-  
Company is the following. "*Henry Bynneman.*"] July 1,  
1577, *Ovid's Invective against Ibis*. Bought of Thomas  
Easte."

§ In the forty-first of Q. Elizabeth, these translations  
from Ovid were commanded, by the archbishop of Can-  
terbury and the bishop of London, to be burnt at Station-  
ers-Hall.

*Salmacis*

*Salmacis and Hermaphroditus*, by FRANCIS BEAU-  
MONT, 4to. 1602

He likewise translated a Part of the Remedy of Love.  
There was another Translation of the whole, by Sir  
THOMAS OVERBURY, 8vo. without date\*.

### PLAUTUS.

*Menæchmi*, by W. W. London†.

### MARTIAL.

*Flowers of Epigrams (from Martial particularly)* by  
TIM. KENDALL, 8vo†. 1577

### TERENCE.

*Terens in Englysh, or the Translaeyon out of Latin into  
Englysh of the first Comedy of Tyrens callyd Andria,  
Supposed to be printed by J. Rastell §*

*Andria,*

\* On the books of the Stationers-Company, Dec. 23,  
1599, is entered "Ovidius Naso his Remedy of Love."  
Again, in the same year, "Ovydes Epistles in Englyshe,"  
and "Ovydes Metamorphosis in Englyshe."

† This piece was entered at Stationers-Hall, June 14,  
1594. In 1520, viz. the 11th year of Henry VIII. it ap-  
pears from Holinshed, that a comedy of Plautus was played  
before the king.

‡ Entered at Stationers-Hall, Feb. 1576.

§ As the following metrical introduction to this play  
relates chiefly to the improvements at that time supposed



*Andria, the first Comedy of Terence, by MAURICE  
KYFFIN, 4to. ————— 1688*

*Terence*

to have been made in the English language, I could not  
prevail on myself to suppress it.

*The Poet.*

The famous renown through the worlde is sprong  
Of poetys ornat that usyd to indyte  
Of dyvers matters in theyr moder tong  
Some toke uppon them translacyons to wryte  
Some to comyle bokys for theyr delyte  
But in our English tong for to speke playn  
I rede but of few have take any gret payn.

Except master Gowre which furst began  
And of moralite wrote ryght craftely  
Than master Chaucer that excellent man  
Which wrote as compendious as elyantly  
As in any other tong ever dyd any  
Ludgate also which adournyd our tong  
Whose noble famys through the world be sprong.

By these men our tong is amplyfyed so  
That we therin now translate as well may  
As in any other tongis other can do  
Yet the Greke tong and Laten dyvers men say  
Have many wordys can not be Englyshid this day  
So lyke wyse in Englysh many wordys do habound  
That no Greke nor Laten for them can be found.

And

*Terence in English*, by RICHARD BERNARD, 4to.  
Cambridge \*. ————— 1598

And the cause that our tong is so plenteouse now  
For we kepe our Englysh contynually  
And of other tongis many wordis we borow  
Which now for Englysh we use and occupy  
These thingis have gyven corage gretly  
To dyvers and specyally now of late  
To them that this comedy have translate.

Which all discrete men now do besech  
And specyally lernyd men to take no dysdayn  
Though this be compyld in our vulgare spech  
Yet lernyng thereby some men may attayn  
For they that in this comedy have take payn  
Pray you to correct where faut shal be found  
And of our matter so here is the ground.

In the metrical peroration to this piece, is the following stanza :

Wherefore the translatours now require you this  
Yf ought be amyss ye wold consyder  
The Englysh almost as short as the Latten is  
And still to kepe ryme a diffycult matter  
To make the sentence opynly to appere  
Which if it had a long expocysion  
Then were it a comment and no translacyon.

\* At Stationers-Hall in 1597, "the second comedy of Terence, called *Eunuchus*," was entered by W. Leake; and the first and second comedie in 1600.

*Floures for Latin speaking, gathered oute of Terence*, by  
G. NIC. UDALL ————— 1560

## SENECA.

*Seneca his Tenne Tragedies \**, translated into Englysh  
by different Translators, 4to. London 1581  
*Seneca's Forme and Rule of Honest Living*, by ROBERT  
WHYTTINGTON, 8vo. — 1546  
*Seven Bookes of Benefyting†*, by ARTHUR GOLDING,  
4to. — — 1577

## LIVY.

*Livius (Titus‡) and other Authores Historie of Annibal  
and Scipio*, translated into English, by ANTHONY  
COPE, Esquier, B. L. 4to. London 1545

\* In the first volume of the entries of the Stationers-  
Company, Aug. 1579, Rich. Jones and John Charlewood,  
entered the 4th tragedie of Seneca. And again all the ten  
in 1581.

† In the first volume of the entries in the books of the  
Stationers-Company is the following, "March 26, 1579,  
*Seneca de Beneficiis*, in Englyshe."

‡ In the first volume of the entries in the books of the  
Stationers-Company, anno 1597, is the following note,  
"Memorandum, that Mr. Alexander Nevill, Gent. is ap-  
pointed to translate *Titus Livius* into the Englyshe tongue:  
expressed, the same is not to be printed, by anie man, but  
only such as shall have his translacion." Again, in 1598,  
"The history of Titus Livius" was entered by Adam Islip.

*The Romane History, &c.* by *T. Livius of Padua*. Also  
*The Breviaries of L. Florus, &c.* by *DR. PHILEMON*  
 HOLLAND, fol. London — 1600

## TACITUS.

*The End of Nero and Beginning of Galba. Fower Bookes*  
*of the Histories of Cornelius Tacitus. The Life of Agri-*  
*cola,* by *SIR HENRY SAVILLE*, 4to. Lond. 1591  
*Annales of Tacitus,* by *RICHARD GRENAWAY*, fol.  
 1598

## SALLUST\*.

*The Famous Cronycle of the Warre, which the Romyns had*  
*against Jugurth, &c.* compyled in Latin by the re-  
 nowned Romayn Sallust, &c. translated into Eng-  
 lyshe, by *SIR ALEX. BARCLAY PREEST, &c.*  
 Printed by Pynson, fol.

*Ditto.*

London, printed by Joh. Waley, 4to. 1557  
*The Conspiracie of Lucius Cataline,* translated into Eng.  
 by *THO. PAYNELL*, 4to. Lond. 1541 and 1557  
*The two most worthy and notable Histories, &c.* Both  
 written by *C. C. Sallustius*, and translated by  
*THO. HEYWOOD*, Lond. sm. fol. 1608

\* A translation of Sallust was entered at Stationers-Hall  
 in 1588. Again, in 1607, "The historie of Sallust in  
 Englishe."

SUETONIUS.

## SUETONIUS.

*Suetonius*, translated by Dr. PHIL. HOLLAND, fol.  
 London ————— 1606 \*

## CÆSAR†.

*Cæsar's Commentaries, as touching British Affairs.* Without name, printer, place, or date; but by the type it appears to be Rastell's.

Ames, p. 148.

*The eight Bookes of Caius Julius Cæsar*, translated by ARTHUR GOLDING, Gent. 4to. London

1565 and 1590

*Cæsar's Commentaries (de Bello Gallico)* five Bookes, by CLEMENT EDMUNDES, with Observations, &c. Fol. ————— 1600

*De Bello Civili*, by ditto, three Bookes, fol. 1609

*Ditto*, by CHAPMAN ————— 1604

## JUSTIN.

*The History of Justine, &c.* by A. G. [ARTHUR GOLDING] London. 4to. 1564 and 1578

*Ditto*, by Dr. PHIL. HOLLAND ————— 1606

\* This translation was entered at Stationers-Hall, 1604.

† In the entries made in the books of the Stationers-Company is the following:

"John Charlewood.] Sept. 1581, Abstracte of the historie of Cæsar and Pompeius."

O o i j

*Ditto,*



*Ditto*, by G. W. with an Epitomie of the Lives, &c.  
of the Romaine Emperors, from Aurelius Victor,  
fol. ————— 1606

## Q. CURTIUS.

*The Historie of Quintus Curtius*, &c. translated, &c. by  
JOHN BRENDE, 4to. London ————— 1553  
*Other Editions were in* — 1561, 1584, 1570, 1592\*

## EUTROPIUS.

*Eutropius englished*, by NIC. HAWARD, 8vo. 1564

## A. MARCELLINUS.

*Ammianus Marcellinus*, translated by Dr. P. HOLLAND,  
London. fol. ————— 1609

## CICERO.

*Cicero's Familiar Epistles*, by J. WEBBE, sm. 8vo.  
no date

*Certain select Epistles into English*, by ABRA. FLEM-  
MING, 4to. London ————— 1576

*Those Fyve Questions which Marke Tullye Cicero disputed  
in his Manor of Tusculanum*, &c. &c. Englyshed by  
JOHN DOLMAN, sm. 8vo. London 1561

\* In the Stationers' books, this or some other translation  
of the same author was entered by Richard Tottell, Feb.  
1582, and again by Tho. Creede, &c. 1599,

Marcus

\* *Marcus Tullius Cicero, three Booke of Duties*, tourned out of Latin into English by NIC. GRIMALDE

1555, 1556, 1558, 1574

*Ames says 1553; perhaps by mistake.*

*The thre Bokes of Tullius Offyce, &c.* translated, &c. by R. WHYTTINGTON, Poet Laureat, 12mo. Lond.

1533, 1534, 1540, and 1553†

*The Boke of Tulle of Old Age*, translated by W. WYRCESTRE, alias BOTANER. Caxton, 4to. 1481

*De Senectute*, by WHYTTINGTON, 8vo. no date

*An Epistle or Letter of Exhortation, written in Latine by Marcus Tullius Cicero, to his Brother Quintus, the Proconsul, or Deputy of Asia, wherein the Office of a Magistrate is cunningly and wisely described*, translated into Englyshe by G. G. set forth and authorised according to the Queene's Majesties Inunctions. Prynted at London, by Rouland Hall, dwelling in Golding-Lane, at the sygne of the three arrowes, 12mo.

1561

\* Maittaire says (Ann. Typog. B. 5. 290.) "In florulentâ tituli margunculâ (vulgo vignette) superiore, inscribitur 1534. This was a wooden block used by the Printer Tottel, for many Books in small 8vo. and by no means determines their Date. There may, however, have been some earlier translation than any here enumerated, as in Sir Tho. Elyot's *Boke named the Governour*, 1537, is mentioned "the worke of Cicero, called in Latine *De Officiis*, whereunto yet is no *propre* English word, &c."

† In the books belonging to Stationers-Hall, "Tullie's Offices in Latin and English," is entered Feb. 1532, for R. Tottell. Again, by Tho. Orwin, 1591.

O o i i j

The

- \*\* *The worthie Booke of Old Age*, otherwise intitled *The Elder Cato*, &c. 12mo. London 1569
- \*\* *Tullius Cicero on Old Age*, by THO. NEWTON, 8vo. London ——— 1569
- Tullie's Friendship, Olde Age, Paradoxe, and Scipio's Dream*, by THO. NEWTON, 4to. 1577
- Tullius de Amicitia*, translated into our maternal English Tongue, by the E. of WORCESTER. Printed by Caxton, with the Translation of *De Senectute*, fol.
- The Paradoxe of M. T. Cicero*, &c. by ROB. WHYTINGTON, Poet-Laureat. Printed in Southwarke, 12mo. ——— 1540
- Webbe translated all the sixteen Books of Cicero's Epistles; but probably they were not printed together in Shakspeare's lifetime. I suppose this from a passage in his Dedication, in which he seems to mean Bacon, by a great Lord Chancellor.*

## BOETHIUS.

- Boethius*, by CHAUCER. Printed by Caxton, fol.
- Boethius in English Verse*, by THO. RYCHARD. Imprinted in the exempt Monastery of Tavistock, 4to. 1525
- English and Latin, by GEO. COLVILLE, 4to. 1556\*

\*\* These are perhaps the same.

\* In the Stationers' books, Jan. 13th, 1608, Matthew Lownes entered "Anitius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boethius, a Christian Consul of Rome, newly translated out of Latin, together with original notes explaining the obscurest places."

## APULEIUS.

## APULEIUS.

*Apuleius's Golden Asse*, translated into English, by W.  
ADLINGTON, 4to. London 1566 and 1571 \*

## FRONTINUS.

*Stratagemes, Sleightes, and Policies of Warre*, gathered  
by S. Julius Frontinus. Translated by RICHARD  
MORISINE, 8vo. Printed by Tho. Berthelet 1539

## PLINY JUNR.

*Some select Epistles of Pliny the Younger*, into English  
by ABR. FLEMMING, 4to. London 1576

## POMPONIUS MELA.

*Pomponius Mela*, by A. GORDING, 4to. 1590

## PLINY.

*Pliny's Nat. Hist.* by Dr. PHIL. HOLLAND, fol†. 1601

\* There is an entry of this translation in the books at Stationers-Hall in 1595. Valentine Simes is the name of the Printer who entered it. It is again entered by Clement Knight in 1600.

† On the books of the Stationers-Company is this entry.  
"Adam Islip, 1600, The xxxvii. bookes of C. Plinius  
Secundus his historie of the worlde, To be translated out  
of Latin into Englyshe, and so printed."

## SOLINUS.

## SOLINUS.

*Julius Solinus Polyhistor*, by A. GOLDING, 4to. 1587

## VEGETIUS.

*The four Bookes of Flavius Vegetius, concerning martial Policye*, by JOHN SADLER, 4to. 1572

## RUTILIUS RUFUS.

*A View of Valiaunce*, translated from Rutilius Rufus, by THO. NEWTON, 8vo. ——— 1580

## DARES Phryg. and DICTYS Cret.

*Dares and Dictys's Trojan War*, in verse. 1555

## CATO and P. SYRUS.

*Caton*\*, translated into Englyshe by Master BENET BURGH, &c. mentioned by Caxton.

*Cathon* [*Pareus et Magnus*] translated, &c. by CAYTON ——— 1483†

\* Probably this was never printed.

† There is an entry of *Caton* at Stationers-Hall in 1591, by — Adams, English and Latin. Again in the year 1591, by Thomas Orwin. Again in 1605, "Four bookes of morall sentences entituled Cato, translated out of Latin into English, by J. M. Master of Arts."



*Preceptes of Cato, with Annotations of Erasmus, &c.*  
24mo. London ————— 1560 and 1562

Ames mentions a *Discourse of Human Nature*, translated from Hippocrates, p. 428; an *Extract from Pliny*, translated from the French, p. 312; *Æsop*\*, &c. by Caxton and others; and there is no doubt, but many *Translations*, at present unknown, may be gradually recovered, either by Industry or Accident.

\* “*Æsop’s Fables in Englishe*” were entered May 7th, 1590, on the books of the Stationers-Company. Again, Oct. 1591. Again, *Esop’s Fables in Meter*, Nov. 1598. Some few of them had been paraphrased by Lydgate, and I believe are still unpublished. See the Brit. Mus. MSS. Harl. 2251.

It is much to be lamented that *Andrew Maunsell*, a bookseller in Lothbury, who published two parts of a catalogue of English printed books, fol. 1595, did not proceed to his third collection. This, according to his own account of it, would have consisted of “*Grammar, Logick, and Rhetoricke, Lawe, Historie, Poetrie, Policie, &c.*” which, as he tells us, “*for the most part concerne matters of delight and pleasure.*”

STEEVENS,

APPENDIX

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# A P P E N D I X

TO

Mr. COLMAN'S

TRANSLATION OF TERENCE,  
OCTAVO EDITION.

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THE reverend and ingenious Mr. Farmer, in his curious and entertaining *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*, having done me the honour to animadvert on some passages in the preface to this translation, I cannot dismiss this edition without declaring how far I coincide with that gentleman; although what I then threw out carelessly on the subject of his pamphlet was merely incidental, nor did I mean to enter the lists as a champion to defend either side of the question.

It is most true, as Mr. Farmer takes for granted, that I had never met with the old comedy called *The Supposes*, nor has it ever yet fallen into my hands; yet I am willing to grant, on Mr. Farmer's authority, that Shakspeare borrowed part of the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*, from that old translation of

Ariosto's

Ariosto's play, by George Gascoign, and had no obligations to Plautus. I will accede also to the truth of Dr. Johnson's and Mr. Farmer's observation, that the line from Terence, exactly as it stands in Shakspeare, is extant in Lilly and Udall's *Floures for Latin Speaking*. Still, however, Shakspeare's total ignorance of the learned languages remains to be proved; for it must be granted, that such books are put into the hands of those who are learning those languages, in which class we must necessarily rank Shakspeare, or he could not even have quoted Terence from Udall or Lilly; nor is it likely, that so rapid a genius should not have made some further progress. "Our author (says Dr. Johnson, as quoted by Mr. Farmer) had this line from Lilly; which I mention, that it may not be brought as an argument of his learning." It is, however, an argument that he read Lilly; and a few pages further it seems pretty certain, that the author of *The Taming of the Shrew* had at least read Ovid; from whose Epistle we find these lines.

*Hæc ibat Simois; hæc est Sigeia tellus;  
Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis.*

And what does Dr. Johnson say on this occasion? Nothing. And what does Mr. Farmer say on this occasion? Nothing.

In Love's Labour Lost, which, bad as it is, is ascribed by Dr. Johnson himself to Shakspeare, there occurs

occurs the word *thrasonical*; another argument which seems to shew that he was not unacquainted with the comedies of Terence; not to mention, that the character of the School-Master in the same play could not possibly be written by a man who had travelled no further in Latin than *hic, hæc, hoc*.

In Henry the Sixth we meet with a quotation from Virgil,

*Tantæ animis cælestibus ira ?*

But this, it seems, proves nothing, any more than the lines from Terence and Ovid, in the Taming of the Shrew; for Mr. Farmer looks on Shakspeare's property in the comedy to be extremely disputable; and he has no doubt but Henry the Sixth had the same author with Edward the Third, which had been recovered to the world in Mr. Capell's Prolusions.

If any play in the collection bears internal evidence of Shakspeare's hand, we may fairly give him *Timon of Athens*. In this play we have a similar quotation from Horace.

*Ira furor brevis est.*

I will not maintain but this hemistich may be found in Lilly or Udall; or that it is not in the *Palace of Pleasure*, or the *English Plutarch*; or that it was not originally foisted in by the players: it stands, however, in the play of *Timon of Athens*.

The

The world in general, and those who purpose to comment on Shakspeare in particular, will owe much to Mr. Farmer, whose researches into our old authors throw a lustre on many passages, the obscurity of which must else have been impenetrable. No future Upton or Gildon will go further than North's translation for Shakspeare's acquaintance with Plutarch, or balance between Dare's Phrygius, and *the Troy booke of Lydgate*. *The historie of Hamblet*, in black letter, will for ever supersede Saxo-Grammaticus; translated novels and ballads will, perhaps, be allowed the sources of Romeo, Lear, and the Merchant of Venice; and Shakspeare himself, however unlike Bayes in other particulars, will stand convicted of having *transversed* the prose of Holingshed; and, at the same time, to prove "that his *studies* lay in his own language," the translations of Ovid are determined to be the production of Heywood.

"That his *studies* were most demonstratively confined to *nature*, and his *own language*," I readily allow; but does it hence follow that he was so deplorably ignorant of every other tongue, living or dead, that he only "remembered, perhaps, enough of his *school-boy* learning to put the *hig, hag, hog*, into the mouth of Sir H. Evans; and might pick up in the writers of the time, or the course of his conversation, a familiar phrase or two of French or Italian?" In Shakspeare's plays both these last languages are plentifully scattered; but then, we are told, they might be impertinent additions of the players. Un-



doubtedly they might: but there they are, and, perhaps, few of the players had much more learning than Shakspeare.

Mr. Farmer himself will allow, that Shakspeare began to learn Latin: I will allow that his *studies* lay in English: but why insist that he neither made any progress at school, nor improved his acquisitions there? The general encomiums of Suckling, Denham, Milton, &c. on his *native genius*\*, prove nothing; and Ben Jonson's celebrated charge of Shakspeare's

\* Mr. Farmer closes these general testimonies of Shakspeare's having been only indebted to nature, by saying, "He came out of her hand, *as some one else expresses it*, "like Pallas out of Jove's head, at full growth, and mature." It is whimsical enough, that this *some one else*, whose expression is here quoted to countenance the general notion of Shakspeare's want of literature, should be no other than myself. Mr. Farmer does not choose to mention where he met with the expression of *some one else*; and *some one else* does not choose to mention where he dropt it †.

† It will appear still more whimsical that this *some one else*, whose expression is here quoted, may have his claim to it superjeded by that of the late Dr. Young, who in his *Conjectures on Original Composition* (p. 100, Vol. V. Edit. 1773) has the following sentence. "An adult genius comes out of Nature's hands, as Pallas out of Jove's head, at full growth, and mature. Shakspeare's genius was of this kind." Where *some one else* the first may have intermediately dropped the contested expression, I cannot ascertain; but *some one else* the second, transcribed it from the author already mentioned.

ANON.

small

*small Latin, and less Greek* \*, seems absolutely to decide that he had *some* knowledge of both; and if we may judge by our own time, a man, who has any Greek, is seldom without a very competent share of Latin; and yet such a man is very likely to study Plutarch in English, and to read translations of Ovid.

*See Dr. Farmer's reply to these remarks by Mr. Colman, in a note on LOVE'S LABOUR LOST, Act IV. Sc. ii. p. 456.*

\* In defence of the various reading of this passage, given in the preface to the last edition of Shakspeare, "small Latin, and no Greek," Mr. Farmer tells us, that "it was adopted above a century ago by W. Towers, in a panegyrick on Cartwright." Surely, Towers having said that Cartwright had *no* Greek, is no proof that Ben Jonson said so of Shakspeare. STEVENS.

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# E X T R A C T

FROM

THE REV. DR. FARMER'S ESSAY

ON THE

*LEARNING of SHAKSPERE.*

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IN 1751, was reprinted "A compendious or briefe examination of certayne ordinary complaints of diuers of our Countrymen in these our days : which although they are in some parte unjust and friuolous, yet are they all by way of dialogue thoroughly debated and discussed by *William Shakspeare*, Gentleman." 8vo.

This extraordinary piece was originally published in 4to, 1581, and dedicated by the author, "To the most vertuous and learned Lady, his most deare and soveraigne Princesse, *Elizabeth* ; being inforced by her majesties late and singular clemency in pardoning certayne his unduetiful misdemeanoir." And by the modern editors, to the late king ; as "a treatise composed by the most extensive and fertile genius, that ever any age or nation produced."

Here we join issue with the writers of that excellent, though very unequal work, the *Biographia Britannica*:

*tannica* : if, say they, this piece could be written by our poet, it would be absolutely decisive in the dispute about his learning ; for many quotations appear in it from the Greek and Latin classicks.

The concurring circumstances of the *name*, and the *misdemeanor*, which is supposed to be the old story of *deer-stealing*, seem fairly to challenge our poet for the author : but they hesitate.—His claim may appear to be confuted by the date 1581, when *Shakspeare* was only *seventeen*, and the *long* experience which the writer talks of.—But I will not keep the reader in suspense : the book was *not* written by *Shakspeare*.

*Strype*, in his *Annals*, calls the author *SOME learned man*, and this gave me the first suspicion. I knew very well, that honest *John* (to use the language of *Sir Thomas Bodley*) did not waste his time with such *baggage books* as *plays* and *poems* ; yet I must suppose, that he had *heard* of the name of *Shakspeare*. After a while I met with the original edition. Here in the title-page, and at the end of the dedication, appear only the initials, W. S. gent. and presently I was informed by *Anthony Wood*, that the book in question was written, not by *William Shakspeare*, but by *William Stafford*, gentleman \* ; which at once accounted for the *misdemeanor* in the dedication. For *Stafford* had

\* *Fasti*, 2d Edit. V. I. 208.—It will be seen on turning to the former edition, that the latter part of the paragraph belongs to another *Stafford*.—I have since observed, that *Wood* is not the first who hath given us the true author of the pamphlet.

been concerned at that time, and was indeed afterward, as *Camden* and the other annalists inform us, with some of the conspirators against *Elizabeth*; which he properly calls his *unduetiful* behaviour.

I hope by this time, that any one open to conviction may be nearly satisfied; and I will promise to give on this head very little more trouble.

The justly celebrated Mr. Warton hath favoured us, in his *Life of Dr. Bathurst*, with some *hearsay* particulars concerning Shakspeare from the papers of Aubrey, which had been in the hands of Wood; and I ought not to suppress them, as the *last* seems to make against my doctrine. They came originally, I find, on consulting the MS. from one Mr. Beeston; and I am sure Mr. Warton, whom I have the honour to call my friend, and an associate in the question, will be in no pain about their credit.

“William Shakspeare’s father was a butcher—while he was a boy he exercised his father’s trade; but, when he killed a calf, he would do it in a high style, and make a speech. This William being inclined *naturally* to poetry and acting, came to London, I guess, about *eighteen*, and was an actor in one of the play-houses, and did act *exceedingly well*. He began *early* to make essays in dramatique poetry.—The humour of the *Constable* in the *Midsummer-Night’s Dream* he happened to take at Crendon\* in Bucks.

I think,

\* This place is not met with in *Spelman’s Villare*, or in *Adams’s Index*; nor in the *first* and the *last* performance of



I think, I have been told, that he left near three hundred pounds to a *sister*. *He understood Latin pretty well, FOR he had been in his younger years a School-Master in the country.*"

I will be short in my animadversions; and take them in their order.

The account of the *trade* of the family is not only contrary to all other tradition, but, as it may seem, to the instrument from the Herald's office, so frequently reprinted. Shakspeare most certainly went to London, and commenced actor through necessity, not natural inclination.—Nor have we any reason to suppose, that he did act *exceedingly well*. Rowe tells us, from the information of Betterton, who was inquisitive into this point, and had very early opportunities of inquiry from Sir W. Davenant, that he was no *extraordinary actor*; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. Yet this *chef d'œuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge, who was for ever pestering the town with pamphlets, published in the year 1596, *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse, discovering the Devils incarnat of this Age*, 4to. One of these devils is *Hate-virtue*, or *Sorrow for another man's good successe*, who, says the doctor, is "*a foule lubber*, and looks as this sort, *Speed's Tables*, and *Whatley's Gazetteer*: perhaps, however, it may be meant under the name of *Crandon*; but the inquiry is of no importance.—It should, I think, be written *Credendon*; though better antiquaries than *Aubrey* have acquiesced in the vulgar corruption.

pale as the vizard of the *Ghost*, which cried so miserably at the theatre, like an oister-wife, *Hamlet revenge* \*." Thus you see Mr. Holt's supposed *proof*, in the appendix to the late edition, that *Hamlet* was written after 1597, or perhaps 1602, will by no means hold good; whatever might be the case of the particular passage on which it is founded.

\* To this observation of Dr. Farmer it may be added, that the play of *Hamlet* was better known by this scene, than by any other. In *Decker's Satiromastix* the following passage occurs :

*Asinius.*

"Would I were hang'd, if I can tell you any names but captain and *Tucca*."

*Tucca.*

"No, fye; my name's *Hamlet Revenge*: thou hast been at Paris-Garden, hast thou not?"

Again, in *Westward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607.

"Let these husbands play *mad Hamlet*, and cry *revenge*!"

STEEVENS.

Dr. Farmer's observation may be further confirmed by the following passage in an anonymous play, called *A Warning for faire Women*, 1599. We also learn from it the usual dress of the stage ghosts of that time.

"——— A filthie whining ghost

"Lapt in some foule sheet, or a *leathern pilch*,

"Comes screaming like a pigge half stickt,

"And cries *vindicta—revenge, revenge*."

The *leathern pilch*, I suppose, was a theatrical substitute for armour. MALONE.

Nor does it appear, that Shakspeare did begin *early* to make *essays in dramatique poetry*: the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, which hath so often been ascribed to him on the credit of Kirkman and Winstanley\*, was written by George Peele; and Shakspeare is not met with, even as an *assistant*, till at least seven years afterward†.—Nash, in his epistle to the gentlemen students of both universities, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, 4to. *black letter*, recommends his friend, Peele, “as the chiefe supporter of pleasance now living, the *Atlas* of poetrie, and *primus verborum artifex*: whose first increase, the *Arraignment of Paris*, might plead to their opinions his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of invention‡.”

In

\* These people, who were the *Curlls* of the last age, ascribe likewise to our author those miserable performances, *Mucedorus*, and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*.

† Mr. Pope asserts “The troublesome Raigne of King *John*,” in two parts, 1611, to have been written by Shakspeare and Rowley: which edition is a mere copy of another in *black letter*, 1591. But I find his assertion is somewhat to be doubted: for the old edition hath no name of author at all; and that of 1611, the initials only, *W. Sh.* in the title-page.

‡ Peele seems to have been taken into the patronage of the Earl of Northumberland about 1593, to whom he dedicates, in that year, “*The Honour of the Garter*, a poem gratulatorie—the *Firstling* consecrated to his noble name.” —“He was esteemed,” says Anthony Wood, “a most noted poet,

In the next place, unfortunately, there is neither such a character as a *Constable* in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*: nor was the *three hundred pounds* legacy to a sister, but a daughter.

And to close the whole, it is not possible, according to Aubrey himself, that Shakspeare could have been

poet, 1570; but when or where he died, I cannot tell, for *so it is*, and always *hath been*, that most *POETS* die *poor*, and consequently obscurely, and a hard matter it is to trace them to their graves. *Claruit 1599.*" *Ath. Oxon.* vol. I. p. 300.

We had lately in a periodical pamphlet, called, *The Theatrical Review*, a very *curious* letter under the name of George Peele, to one Master Henrie Marle; relative to a dispute between Shakspeare and Alleyn, which was compromised by Ben Jonson.—“I never longed for thy company more than last night; we were all verie merrie at the Globe, when Ned Alleyn did not scruple to affyrme plesauntly to thy friende Will, that he had stolen hys speeche about the excellencie of acting in Hamlet hys tragedye, from conversaytions manifold; whych had passed between them, and opinions gyven by Alleyn touchyng that subiecte. Shakspeare did not take this talk in good sorte: but Jonson did put an end to the stryfe wyth wittellie saying, thys affaire needeth no contentione: you stole it from Ned, no doubt; do not marvel; haue you not seene hym acte tymes onte of number?”—This is pretended to be printed from the original MS. dated 1600; which agrees well enough with Wood's *Claruit*: but unluckily, Peele was dead at least two years before. “As Anacreon died by the *pot*, says Meres, so George Peele by the *pox*.” *Wit's Treasury*, 1598, p. 286.

some years a School-Master in the country: on which circumstance only the supposition of his learning is professedly founded. He was not surely *very* young, when he was employed to *kill calves*, and he commenced player about *eighteen*!—The truth is, that he left his father, for a wife, a year sooner; and had at least two children born at Stratford before he retired from thence to London. It is therefore sufficiently clear, that poor Anthony had too much reason for his character of Aubrey: we find it in his own account of his life, published by Hearne, which I would earnestly recommend to any hypochondriack:

“A pretender to antiquities, roving, magotie-headed, and sometimes little better than crased: and being exceedingly credulous, would stuff his many letters sent to A. W. with *follies* and misinformations.” p. 577.

FARMER.

SOME



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*SOME ACCOUNT of the LIFE, &c.*

O F

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

*Written by Mr. ROWE.*

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IT seems to be a kind of respect due to the memory of excellent men, especially of those whom their wit and learning have made famous, to deliver some account of themselves, as well as their works, to posterity. For this reason, how fond do we see some people of discovering any little personal story of the great men of antiquity! their families, the common incidents of their lives, and even their shape, make, and features, have been the subject of critical inquiries. How trifling soever this curiosity may seem to be, it is certainly very natural; and we are hardly satisfied with an account of any remarkable person, till we have heard him described even to the very clothes he wears. As for what relates to men of letters, the knowledge of an author may sometimes conduce to the better understanding his book; and  
though



NICHOLAS ROWE.

Godfrey Kneller pinx.

A. Smith sculp.

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though the works of Mr. Shakspeare may seem to many not to want a comment, yet I fancy some little account of the man himself may not be thought improper to go along with them.

He was the son of Mr. John Shakspeare, and was born at Stratford upon Avon, in Warwickshire, in April 1564. His family, as appears by the register and publick writings relating to that town, were of good figure and fashion there, and are mentioned as gentlemen. His father, who was a considerable dealer in wool, had so large a family, ten children in all, that though he was his eldest son, he could give him no better education than his own employment. He had bred him, it is true, for some time at a free-school, where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was master of: but the narrowness of his circumstances, and the want of his assistance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language. It is without controversy, that in his works we scarce find any traces of any thing that looks like an imitation of the ancients. The delicacy of his taste, and the natural bent of his own great *genius* (equal, if not superior, to some of the best of theirs), would certainly have led him to read and study them with so much pleasure, that some of their fine images would naturally have insinuated themselves into, and been mixed with, his own writings; so that his not copying at least something from them may be an argument of his never having read them. Whether his

ignorance of the ancients were a disadvantage to him or no, may admit of a dispute: for though the knowledge of them might have made him more correct, yet it is not improbable but that the regularity and deference for them, which would have attended that correctness, might have restrained some of that fire, impetuosity, and even beautiful extravagance, which we admire in Shakspeare: and I believe we are better pleased with those thoughts, altogether new and uncommon, which his own imagination supplied him so abundantly with, than if he had given us the most beautiful passages out of the Greek and Latin poets, and that in the most agreeable manner that it was possible for a master of the English language to deliver them.

Upon his leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him; and, in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway, said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, till an extravagance, that he was guilty of, forced him both out of his country, and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it seemed at first to be a blemish upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest *geniuses* that ever was known in dramatick poetry. He had, by a misfortune  
common



common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company; and, amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Cherlecot, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and, in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost\*, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London.

It is at this time, and upon this accident, that he is said to have made his first acquaintance in the playhouse†. He was received into the company then in being, at first, in a very mean rank; but his admirable wit, and the natural turn of it to the stage, soon distinguished him, if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent writer. His name is printed, as the custom was in those times, amongst those of

\* See, however, Note to *Merry Wives of Windsor*, p. 244.

REED.

† There is a stage tradition, that his first office in the theatre was that of prompter's attendant; whose employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready to enter as often as the business of the play requires their appearance on the stage. MALONE.

the other players, before some old plays, but without any particular account of what sort of parts he used to play; and, though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. I should have been much more pleased, to have learned, from certain authority, which was the first play he wrote\*; it would be without doubt a pleasure to any man, curious in things of this kind, to see and know what was the first essay of a fancy like Shakspeare's. Perhaps we are not to look for his beginnings, like those of other authors, among their least perfect writings; art had so little, and nature had so large a share in what he did, that for aught I know, the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, and had the most fire and strength of imagination in them, were the best. I would not be thought by this to mean, that his fancy was so loose and extravagant, as to be independent on the rule and government of judgment; but that what he thought was commonly so great, so justly and rightly conceived in itself, that it wanted little or no correction, and was immediately approved by an impartial judgment at the first sight. But though the order of time in which the several pieces were written

\* The highest date of any I can yet find is *Romeo and Juliet*, in 1597, when the author was 33 years old; and *Richard the Second*, and *Third*, in the next year, viz. the 34th of his age.

be generally uncertain, yet there are passages in some few of them which seem to fix their dates. So the *Chorus* at the end of the fourth act of *Henry the Fifth*, by a compliment very handsomely turned to the earl of Essex, shews the play to have been written when that lord was general for the queen in Ireland; and his eulogy upon queen Elizabeth, and her successor king James, in the latter-end of his *Henry the Eighth*, is a proof of that play's being written after the accession of the latter of those two princes to the crown of England. Whatever the particular times of his writing were, the people of his age, who began to grow wonderfully fond of diversions of this kind, could not but be highly pleased, to see a *genius* arise from amongst them of so pleasurable, so rich a vein, and so plentifully capable of furnishing their favourite entertainments. Besides the advantages of his wit, he was in himself a good-natured man, of great sweetness in his manners, and a most agreeable companion; so that it is no wonder, if, with so many good qualities, he made himself acquainted with the best conversations of those times. Queen Elizabeth had several of his plays acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious marks of her favour: it is that maiden princess plainly, whom he intends by

——— *A fair vestal, throned by the west.*

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Qq iij

And

And that whole passage is a compliment very properly brought in, and very handsomely applied to her. She was so well pleased with that admirable character of Falstaff, in *The two Parts of Henry the Fourth*, that she commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to shew him in love. This is said to be the occasion of his writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. How well she was obeyed, the play itself is an admirable proof. Upon this occasion it may not be improper to observe, that this part of Falstaff is said to have been written originally under the name of *Oldcastle* \*; some of that family being then remaining, the queen was pleased to command him to alter it; upon which he made use of Falstaff. The present offence was indeed avoided; but I do not know whether the author may not have been somewhat to blame in his second choice, since it is certain that Sir John Falstaff, who was a knight of the garter, and a lieutenant-general, was a name of distinguished merit in the wars in France in Henry the Fifth's and Henry the Sixth's times. What grace soever the queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only he owed the fortune which the reputation of his wit made. He had the honour to meet with many great and uncommon marks of favour and friendship from the earl of Southampton, famous in the histories of that time for his friendship to the unfortunate earl of Essex. It was to that noble lord that he dedicated his poem

\* See the Epilogue to *Henry the Fourth*.

of *Venus and Adonis*. There is one instance so singular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakspeare's, that, if I had not been assured that the story was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I should not have ventured to have inserted, that my lord Southampton at one time gave him a thousand pounds, to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to; a bounty very great, and very rare at any time, and almost equal to that profuse generosity the present age hath shewn to French dancers and Italian singers.

What particular habitude or friendships he contracted with private men, I have not been able to learn, more than that every one, who had a true taste of merit, and could distinguish men, had generally a just value and esteem for him. His exceeding candour and good-nature must certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the most delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him.

His acquaintance with Ben Jonson began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good-nature. Mr. Jonson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the persons into whose hands it was put, after having turned it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natured answer, that it would be of no service to their company; when Shakspeare luckily

cast



cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it, as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the publick. Jonson was certainly a very good scholar, and in that had the advantage of Shakspeare; though at the same time, I believe, it must be allowed, that what nature gave the latter was more than a balance for what books had given the former; and the judgment of a great man upon this occasion was, I think, very just and proper. In a conversation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of Eton, and Ben Jonson; Sir John Suckling, who was a professed admirer of Shakspeare, had undertaken his defence against Ben Jonson with some warmth; Mr. Hales, who had sat still for some time, told them, *That if Mr. Shakspeare had not read the ancients, he had likewise not stolen any thing from them; and that if he would produce any one topick finely treated by any one of them, he would undertake to shew something upon the same subject, at least as well written, by Shakspeare.*

The latter part of his life was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather an estate equal to his occasion, and, in that, to his wish; and is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford. His pleasurable wit and good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendship, of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood.

Amongst

Amongst them, it is a story almost still remembered in that country, that he had a particular intimacy with Mr. Combe, an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and usury: it happened, that in a pleasant conversation amongst their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakspeare, in a laughing manner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to out-live him; and since he could not know what might be said of him when he was dead, he desired it might be done immediately: upon which Shakspeare gave him these four verses:

*Ten in the hundred lies here engrav'd,  
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not sav'd:  
If any man ask, Who lies in this tomb?  
Oh! oh! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe\*.*

But

\* The Rev. Francis Peck, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton*, 4to. 1740, p. 223. has introduced another epitaph imputed (on what authority is unknown) to Shakspeare. It is on *Tom-a-Combe*, alias *Thin-beard*, brother to this *John*, who is mentioned by Mr. Rowe:

*"Thin in beard, and thick in purse;  
"Never man beloved worse;  
"He went to the grave with many a curse:  
"The devil and he had both one nurse."*

STEEVENS.

Ten

But the sharpness of the satire is said to have  
stung

*Ten in the hundred lies here engrav'd —*

In *The more the Merrier*, containing *Threescore and odde headlesse Epigrams, shot (like the Fooles bolts) amongst you, light where they will.* By H. P. Gent. &c. 1608, I find likewise the following couplet, which is almost the same as the two beginning lines of Shakspeare's *Epitaph on John a Combe.*

*Fæneratoris Epitaphium.*

EPICRAM 24.

“Ten in the hundred lies under this stone,  
“And a hundred to ten to the Devil he's gone.”

I take the same opportunity to avow my disbelief that Shakspeare was the author of Mr. Combe's Epitaph, or that it was written by any other person at the request of that gentleman. If Betterton the player did really visit Warwickshire for the sake of collecting anecdotes relative to our author, perhaps he was too easily satisfied with such as fell in his way, without making any rigid search into their authenticity. It appears also from a following copy of this inscription, that it was not ascribed to Shakspeare so early as two years after his death. Mr. Reed of Staple-Inn obligingly pointed it out to me in the *Remains*, &c. of Richard Braithwaite, 1618; and, as his edition of our epitaph varies in some measure from the later one published by Mr. Rowe, I shall not hesitate to transcribe it:

“Upon one *John Combe* of *Stratford upon Avon*, a notable Usurer, fastened upon a Tombe that he had caused to be built in his Life Time,

“Ten

stung the man so severely, that he never forgave it.

He

- “ Ten in the hundred must lie in his grave,  
 “ But a hundred to ten whether God will him have :  
 “ Who then must be interr'd in this tombe?  
 “ Oh (quoth the divell) my *John a Combe.*”

Here it may be observed that, strictly speaking, this is no jocular epitaph, but a malevolent prediction ; and Braithwaite's copy is surely more to be depended on (being procured in or before the year 1618) than that delivered to Betterton or Rowe, almost a century afterwards. It has been already remarked, that two of the lines, said to have been produced on this occasion, were printed as an epigram in 1608, by H. P. Gent. and are likewise found in Cambden's *Remains*, 1614. I may add, that a usurer's solicitude to know what would be reported of him, when he was dead, is not a very probable circumstance ; neither was Shakspeare of a disposition to compose an invective, at once so bitter and uncharitable, during *a pleasant conversation among the common friends* of himself and a gentleman with whose family he lived in such friendship, that at his death he bequeathed his sword to Mr. Thomas Combe as a legacy. A miser's monument indeed, constructed during his lifetime, might be regarded as a challenge to satire ; and we cannot wonder that anonymous lampoons should have been affixed to the marble designed to convey the character of such a being to posterity.—I hope I may be excused for this attempt to vindicate Shakspeare from the imputation of having poisoned the hour of confidence and festivity, by producing the severest of all censures on one  
 of

He died in the 53d year of his age, and was buried on the north-side of the chancel, in the great church at

of his company. I am unwilling, in short, to think he could so wantonly and so publickly have expressed his doubts concerning the salvation of one of his fellow-creatures. STEEVENS.

So in Camden's *Remains*, 1614.

“ Here lies ten in the hundred

“ In the ground fast ramm'd,

“ 'Tis a hundred to ten

“ But his soul is damn'd.” MALONE,

Whether the epitaph on Combe was Shakspeare's or not, it is not at present possible to determine; this however, which follows, is inserted, both because it hath been attributed to him, and also because Milton appears, from his epitaph on Shakspeare, to have been no stranger to it.

Epitaph on the tomb of Sir Thomas Stanley, knt. second son of Edward Earl of Derby; which was remaining on the north-side of the chancel of the church of Tong, in the county of Salop, in 1663, when Sir William Dugdale made the last visitation of that county; and which Sir William, in a marginal note, says, was written by William Shakspeare the late famous tragedian:

“ Aske who lies here, but do not weepe;

“ He is not dead, he doth but sleepe:

“ This stony Register is for his Bones,

“ His Fame is more perpetuall than these Stones;





*Shakspeare's Monument in the  
Church at Stratford upon Avon*

London, Printed for J. Ball, British Library, Strand, Decem<sup>r</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> 1786.



at Stratford, where a monument, as engraved in the plate, is placed in the wall \*. On his grave-stone underneath is,

*Good friend; for Jesus' sake forbear  
To dig the dust inclosed here.  
Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And curst be he that moves my bones †.*

" And his own goodnesse, with himself being gone,  
" Shall live when earthly monument is none.  
" Not monumentall stone preserves our fame,  
" Nor skye aspiring Piramids our name;  
" The memory of him for whom this stands,  
" Shall out-live marble and defacers' hands:  
" When all to time's consumption shall be given,  
" Stanley, for whom this stands, shall stand in Heaven."

From C. 35. fol. 20. in the College of Arms.

F. TOWNSEND.

\* He died on his birth-day, April 23, 1616, and had exactly completed his fifty-second year. MALONE.

† " And curst be he that moves my bones."

It is uncertain whether this epitaph was written by Shakspeare himself, or by one of his friends after his death. The imprecation contained in this last line might have been suggested by an apprehension that our author's remains might share the same fate with those of the rest of his countrymen, and be added to the immense pile of human bones deposited in the charnel-house at Stratford. This, however, is mere conjecture; for similar execrations are found in many ancient Latin epitaphs. MALONE.

He had three daughters, of which two lived to be married; Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney, by whom she had three sons, who all died without children; and Susanna, who was his favourite, to Dr. John Hall, a physician of good reputation in that country. She left one child only, a daughter, who was married, first, to Thomas Nash, esq. and afterwards to Sir John Bernard of Abbingdon, but died likewise without issue\*.

This is what I could learn of any note, either relating to himself or family: the character of the man is best seen in his writings. But since Ben Jonson has made a sort of an essay towards it in his *Discoveries*, I will give it in his words:

“ I remember the players have often mentioned it  
 “ as an honour to Shakspeare, that in writing (what-  
 “ soever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My  
 “ answer hath been, *Would he had blotted a thousand!*  
 “ which they thought a malevolent speech. I had  
 “ not told posterity this, but for their ignorance,  
 “ who chose that circumstance to commend their friend  
 “ by, wherein he most faulted: and to justify mine  
 “ own candour, for I loved the man, and do honour  
 “ his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any.  
 “ He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free  
 “ nature, had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and  
 “ gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that

\* This, however, is a mistake, as will appear by the pedigree annexed to the list of baptisms, &c. REED.

“ facility,

“facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should  
 “be stopped: *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Augustus said  
 “of Haterius. His wit was in his own power:  
 “would the rule of it had been so too! Many times  
 “he fell into those things which could not escape  
 “laughter; as when he said in the person of Cæsar,  
 “one speaking to him,

“*Cæsar, thou dost me wrong,*

“he replied,

“*Cæsar did never wrong, but with just cause.*

“And such like, which were ridiculous. But he re-  
 “deemed his vices with his virtues: there was ever  
 “more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.”

As for the passage which he mentions out of Shak-  
 spere, there is somewhat like it in *Julius Cæsar*, but  
 without the absurdity; nor did I ever meet with it in  
 any edition that I have seen, as quoted by Mr. Jon-  
 son. Besides his plays in this edition, there are two  
 or three ascribed to him by Mr. Langbain, which I  
 have never seen, and know nothing of. He writ like-  
 wise *Venus and Adonis*, and *Tarquin and Lucrece*, in  
 stanzas, which have been printed in a late collection  
 of poems. As to the character given of him by Ben  
 Jonson, there is a good deal in it: but I believe it  
 may be as well expressed by what Horace says of  
 the first Romans, who wrote tragedy upon the Greek  
 models (or indeed translated them) in his epistle to  
 Augustus:



—*Naturâ sublimis & acer,  
Nam spirat tragicum satis & feliciter audet!  
Sed turpem putat in chartis metuitque lituram.*

As I have not proposed to myself to enter into a large and complete collection upon Shakspeare's works, so I will only take the liberty, with all due submission to the judgment of others, to observe some of those things I have been pleased with in looking him over.

His plays are properly to be distinguished only into comedies and tragedies. Those which are called histories, and even some of his comedies, are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongst them. That way of tragi-comedy was the common mistake of that age, and is indeed become so agreeable to the English taste, that though the severer criticks among us cannot bear it, yet the generality of our audiences seem to be better pleased with it than with an exact tragedy. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*, are all pure comedy; the rest, however they are called, have something of both kinds. It is not very easy to determine which way of writing he was most excellent in. There is certainly a great deal of entertainment in his comical humours; and though they did not then strike at all ranks of people, as the satire of the present age has taken the liberty to do, yet there is a pleasing and a well-distinguished variety in those characters which he thought fit to meddle with.

with. Falstaff is allowed by every body to be a master-piece ; the character is always well sustained, though drawn out into the length of three plays ; and even the account of his death, given by his old landlady, Mrs. Quickly, in the first act of *Henry the Fifth*, though it be extremely natural, is yet as diverting as any part of his life. If there be any fault in the draught he hath made of this lewd old fellow, it is, that though he has made him a thief, lying, cowardly, vain-glorious, and, in short, every way vicious, yet he has given him so much wit as to make him almost too agreeable ; and I do not know whether some people have not, in remembrance of the diversion he had formerly afforded them, been sorry to see his friend Hal use him so scurvily, when he comes to the crown in the end of *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*. Amongst other extravagancies, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he hath made him a deer-stealer, that he might at the same time remember his Warwickshire prosecutor, under the name of Justice Shallow ; he has given him very near the same coat of arms which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, describes for a family there, and makes the Welsh parson descant very pleasantly upon them. That whole play is admirable ; the humours are various and well opposed ; the main design, which is to cure Ford of his unreasonable jealousy, is extremely well conducted. In *Twelfth Night*, there is something singularly ridiculous and pleasant in the fantastical steward Malvolio. The parasite and the vain-glorious

in *Parolles*, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, is as good as any thing of that kind in *Plautus* or *Terence*. *Petruchio*, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, is an uncommon piece of humour. The conversation of *Benedict* and *Beatrice*, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and of *Rosalind* in *As you Like It*, have much wit and sprightliness all along. His clowns, without which character there was hardly any play writ in that time, are all very entertaining; and, I believe, *Thersities* in *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Apemantus* in *Timon*, will be allowed to be master-pieces of ill-nature, and satirical snarling. To these I might add, that incomparable character of *Shylock the Jew*, in *The Merchant of Venice*; but though we have seen that play received and acted as a comedy\*, and the part of the Jew performed by an excellent comedian, yet I cannot but think it was designed tragically by the author. There appears in it a deadly spirit of revenge, such a savage fierceness and fellness, and such a bloody designation of cruelty and mischief, as cannot agree either with the style or characters of comedy. The play itself, take it altogether, seems to me to be one of the most finished of any of *Shakspere's*. The tale, indeed, in that part relating to the caskets, and the extravagant and unusual kind

\* In 1701 Lord Lansdowne produced his alteration of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, under the title of *The Jew of Venice*, and expressly calls it a comedy. *Shylock* was performed by Mr. Dogget. REED.

of bond given by Antonio, is too much removed from the rules of probability; but, taking the fact for granted, we must allow it to be very beautifully written. There is something in the friendship of Antonio to Bassanio very great, generous, and tender. The whole fourth act (supposing, as I said, the fact to be probable) is extremely fine. But there are two passages that deserve a particular notice. The first is, what Portia says in praise of mercy, and the other on the power of musick. The melancholy of Jaques, in *As you Like It*, is as singular and odd as it is diverting. And if, what Horace says,

*Difficile est propriè communia dicere,*

it will be a hard task for any one to go beyond him in the description of the several degrees and ages of man's life, though the thought be old, and common enough.

— *All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. First the infant,  
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms:  
And then, the whining school-boy with his satchel,  
And shining morning-face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover  
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then a soldier,*

*Full*

*Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,  
 Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
 Seeking the bubble reputation  
 Ev'n in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
 In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,  
 With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,  
 Full of wise saws and modern instances;  
 And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
 Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,  
 With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;  
 His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide  
 For his shrunk shanks; and his big manly voice,  
 Turning again tow'rd childish treble, pipes  
 And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
 That ends this strange eventful history,  
 Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,  
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.*

His images are indeed every where so lively, that the thing he would represent stands full before you, and you possess every part of it. I will venture to point out one more, which is, I think, as strong and as uncommon as any thing I ever saw; it is an image of patience. Speaking of a maid in love, he says,

————— *She never told her love,  
 But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,  
 Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,  
 And sat like Patience on a monument——  
 Smiling at grief.*



What an image is here given! and what a task would it have been for the greatest masters of Greece and Rome to have expressed the passions designed by this sketch of statuary! The style of his comedy is, in general, natural to the characters, and easy in itself; and the wit most commonly sprightly and pleasing, except in those places where he runs into doggerel rhimes, as in *The Comedy of Errors*, and some other plays. As for his jingling sometimes, and playing upon words, it was the common vice of the age he lived in: and if we find it in the pulpit, made use of as an ornament to the sermons of some of the gravest divines of those times, perhaps it may not be thought too light for the stage.

But certainly the greatness of this author's genius does no where so much appear, as where he gives his imagination an entire loose, and raises his fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the visible world. Such are his attempts in *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*. Of these, *The Tempest*, however it comes to be placed the first by the publishers of his works, can never have been the first written by him: it seems to me as perfect in its kind, as almost any thing we have of his. One may observe, that the unities are kept here, with an exactness uncommon to the liberties of his writing; though that was what, I suppose, he valued himself least upon, since his excellencies were all of another kind. I am very sensible that he does, in this play, depart too much from that likeness to truth which ought

ought to be observed in these sort of writings; yet he does it so very finely, that one is easily drawn in to have more faith for his sake, than reason does well allow of. His magick has something in it very solemn and very poetical: and that extravagant character of Caliban is mightily well sustained; shews a wonderful invention in the author, who could strike out such a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the finest and most uncommon grotesques that ever was seen. The observation, which I have been informed three very great men \* concurred in making upon this part, was extremely just; *That Shakspeare had not only found out a new character in his Caliban, but had also devised and adapted a new manner of language for that character.*

It is the same magick that raises the Fairies in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Witches in *Macbeth*, and the Ghost in *Hamlet*, with thoughts and language so proper to the parts they sustain, and so peculiar to the talent of this writer. But of the two last of these plays I shall have occasion to take notice, among the tragedies of Mr. Shakspeare. If one undertook to examine the greatest part of these by those rules which are established by Aristotle, and taken from the model of a Grecian stage, it would be no very hard task to find a great many faults; but as Shakspeare lived under a kind of mere light of nature, and had never

\* Lord Falkland, Lord C. J. Vaughan, and Mr. Selden,

been made acquainted with the regularity of those written precepts, so it would be hard to judge him by a law he knew nothing of. We are to consider him as a man that lived in a state of almost universal licence and ignorance : there was no established judge ; but every one took the liberty to write according to the dictates of his own fancy. When one considers, that there is not one play before him of a reputation good enough to entitle it to an appearance on the present stage, it cannot but be a matter of great wonder that he should advance dramattick poetry so far as he did. The fable is what is generally placed the first among those that are reckoned the constituent parts of a tragick or heroick poem ; not, perhaps, as it is the most difficult or beautiful, but as it is the first properly to be thought of in the contrivance and course of the whole ; and with the fable ought to be considered the fit disposition, order, and conduct of its several parts. As it is not in this province of the *drama* that the strength and mastery of Shakspeare lay, so I shall not undertake the tedious and ill-natured trouble to point out the several faults he was guilty of in it. His tales were seldom invented, but rather taken either from true history, or novels and romances : and he commonly made use of them in that order, with those incidents, and that extent of time in which he found them in the authors from whence he borrowed them. Almost all his historical plays comprehend a great length of time, and very different and distinct places ; and in his *Antony and Cleopatra*, the scene

scene travels over the greatest part of the Roman empire. But in recompence for his carelessness in this point, when he comes to another part of the drama, the manners of his characters, in acting or speaking what is proper for them, and fit to be shewn by the poet, he may be generally justified, and in very many places greatly commended. For those plays which he has taken from the English or Roman history, let any man compare them, and he will find the character as exact in the poet as the historian. He seems, indeed, so far from proposing to himself any one action for a subject, that the title very often tells you, it is *The Life of King John, King Richard, &c.* What can be more agreeable to the idea our historians give of *Henry the Sixth*, than the picture Shakspeare has drawn of him! His manners are every where exactly the same with the story; one finds him still described with simplicity, passive sanctity, want of courage, weakness of mind, and easy submission to the governance of an imperious wife, or prevailing faction: though at the same time the poet does justice to his good qualities, and moves the pity of his audience for him, by shewing him pious, disinterested, a contemner of the things of this world, and wholly resigned to the severest dispensations of God's providence. There is a short scene in *The Second Part of Henry the Sixth*, which I cannot but think admirable in its kind. Cardinal Beaufort, who had murdered the Duke of Gloucester, is shewn in the last agonies on his death-bed, with the good king praying over him.

There

There is so much terror in one, so much tenderness and moving piety in the other, as must touch any one who is capable either of fear or pity. In his *Henry the Eighth*, that prince is drawn with that greatness of mind, and all those good qualities which are attributed to him in any account of his reign. If his faults are not shewn in an equal degree, and the shades in this picture do not bear a just proportion to the lights, it is not that the artist wanted either colours or skill in the disposition of them; but the truth, I believe, might be, that he forbore doing it out of regard to Queen Elizabeth, since it could have been no very great respect to the memory of his mistress, to have exposed some certain parts of her father's life upon the stage. He has dealt much more freely with the minister of that great king; and certainly nothing was ever more justly written than the character of Cardinal Wolsey. He has shewn him insolent in his prosperity; and yet, by a wonderful address, he makes his fall and ruin the subject of general compassion. The whole man, with his vices and virtues, is finely and exactly described in the second scene of the fourth act. The distresses likewise of Queen Catharine, in this play, are very movingly touched; and though the art of the poet has screened King Henry from any gross imputation of injustice, yet one is inclined to wish the queen had met with a fortune more worthy of her birth and virtue. Nor are the manners, proper to the persons represented, less justly observed, in those characters



taken from the Roman history; and of this, the fierceness and impatience of Coriolanus, his courage and disdain of the common people, the virtue and philosophical temper of Brutus, and the irregular greatness of mind in M. Antony, are beautiful proofs. For the two last especially, you find them exactly as they are described by Plutarch, from whom certainly Shakspeare copied them. He has indeed followed his original pretty close, and taken in several little incidents that might have been spared in a play. But, as I hinted before, his design seems most commonly rather to describe those great men in the several fortunes and accidents of their lives, than to take any single great action, and form his work simply upon that. However, there are some of his pieces, where the fable is founded upon one action only. Such are, more especially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The design in *Romeo and Juliet* is plainly the punishment of their two families, for the unreasonable feuds and animosities that had been so long kept up between them, and occasioned the effusion of so much blood. In the management of this story, he has shewn something wonderfully tender and passionate in the love-part, and very pitiful in the distress. *Hamlet* is founded on much the same tale with the *Electra of Sophocles*. In each of them a young prince is engaged to revenge the death of his father; their mothers are equally guilty, are both concerned in the murder of their husbands, and are afterwards married to the murderers. There is, in the first part  
of

of the Greek tragedy, something very moving in the grief of Electra; but, as Mr. Dacier has observed, there is something very unnatural and shocking in the manners he has given that princess and Orestes in the latter part. Orestes imbrues his hands in the blood of his own mother; and that barbarous action is performed, though not immediately upon the stage, yet so near, that the audience hear Clytemnestra crying out to Ægysthus for help, and to her son for mercy: while Electra, her daughter, and a princess (both of them characters that ought to have appeared with more decency), stands upon the stage, and encourages her brother in the parricide. What horror does this not raise! Clytemnestra was a wicked woman, and had deserved to die; nay, in the truth of the story, she was killed by her own son; but to represent an action of this kind on the stage, is certainly an offence against those rules of manners proper to the persons, that ought to be observed there. On the contrary, let us only look a little on the conduct of Shakspeare. Hamlet is represented with the same piety towards his father, and resolution to revenge his death, as Orestes; he has the same abhorrence for his mother's guilt, which, to provoke him the more, is heightened by incest: but it is with wonderful art and justness of judgment, that the poet restrains him from doing violence to his mother. To prevent any thing of that kind, he makes his father's Ghost forbid that part of his vengeance:

Ss ij

But

*But howsoever thou pursu'st this act,  
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
Against thy mother aught ; leave her to heav'n,  
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
To prick and sting her.*

This is to distinguish rightly between *horror* and *terror*. The latter is a proper passion of tragedy, but the former ought always to be carefully avoided. And certainly no dramattick writer ever succeeded better in raising *terror* in the minds of an audience than Shakspeare has done. The whole tragedy of *Macbeth*, but more especially the scene where the king is murdered, in the second act, as well as this play, is a noble proof of that manly spirit with which he writ ; and both shew how powerful he was, in giving the strongest motions to our souls that they are capable of. I cannot leave *Hamlet*, without taking notice of the advantage with which we have seen this master-piece of Shakspeare distinguish itself upon the stage, by Mr. Betterton's fine performance of that part ; a man, who, though he had no other good qualities, as he has a great many, must have made his way into the esteem of all men of letters, by this only excellency. No man is better acquainted with Shakspeare's manner of expression, and indeed he has studied him so well, and is so much a master of him, that whatever part of his he performs, he does it as if it had been written on purpose for him, and that the author had exactly conceived it as he plays it. I must own a particular obligation

obligation to him, for the most considerable part of the passages relating to this life, which I have here transmitted to the publick; his veneration for the memory of Shakspeare having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire, on purpose to gather up what remains he could, of a name for which he had so great a veneration \*.

\* This *Account of the Life of Shakspeare* is printed from Mr. Rowe's second edition, in which it had been abridged and altered by himself after its appearance in 1709.

STEEVENS:

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*To the foregoing Accounts of SHAKSPERE'S LIFE,  
I have only one Passage to add, which Mr.  
POPE related, as communicated to him by  
Mr. ROWE.*

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IN the time of Elizabeth, coaches being yet uncommon, and hired coaches not at all in use, those who were too proud, too tender, or too idle to walk, went on horseback to any distant business or diversion. Many came on horseback to the play\*, and when

\* Plays were at this time performed in the afternoon, "The pollicie of plaies is very necessary, howsoever some shallow-brained censurers (not the deepest searchers into the secrets of government) mightily oppugne them. For whereas *the afternoone* being the idlest time of the day wherein men that are their own masters (as gentlemen of the court, the innes of the court, and a number of captains and soldiers about London) do wholly bestow themselves upon pleasure, and that pleasure they deuide (how vertuously it skills not) either in gaming, following of harlots, drinking, or seeing a play, is it not better (since of four extreames all the world cannot keepe them but they will choose one) that they should betake them to the least, which is plaies?" Nash's *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil*, 1595. STEEVENS.

Shakspere



Shakspere fled to London from the terror of a criminal prosecution, his first expedient was to wait at the door of the playhouse, and hold the horses of those that had no servants, that they might be ready again after the performance. In this office he became so conspicuous for his care and readiness, that in a short time every man, as he alighted, called for Will. Shakspere, and scarcely any other waiter was trusted with a horse, while Will. Shakspere could be had. This was the first dawn of better fortune. Shakspere, finding more horses put into his hand than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inspection, who, when Will. Shakspere was summoned, were immediately to present themselves, *I am Shakspere's boy, Sir.* In time Shakspere found higher employment; but as long as the practice of riding to the playhouse continued, the waiters that held the horses retained the appellation of *Shakspere's boys* \*. JOHNSON.

Mr.

\* I cannot dismiss this anecdote, without observing that it seems to want every mark of probability. Though Shakspere quitted Stratford on account of a juvenile irregularity, we have no reason to suppose that he had forfeited the protection of his father, who was engaged in a lucrative business, or the love of his wife who had already brought him two children, and was herself the daughter of a substantial yeoman. It is unlikely, therefore, when he was beyond the reach of his prosecutor, that he should conceal his plan of life, or place of residence from those who, if he found himself distressed, could not fail to afford

Mr. Rowe has told us that he derived the principal anecdotes, in his account of Shakspeare, from Betterton the player, whose zeal had induced him to visit Stratford, for the sake of procuring all possible intelligence

afford him such supplies as would have set him above the necessity of *holding horses* for subsistence. Mr. Malone has remarked, in his *Attempt to ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakspeare were written*, that he might have found an easy introduction to the stage; for Thomas Green, a celebrated comedian of that period, was his townsman, and perhaps his relation. The genius of our author prompted him to write poetry; his connection with a player might have given his productions a dramatick turn; or his own sagacity might have taught him that fame was not incompatible with profit, and that the theatre was an avenue to both. That it was once the custom to ride on horseback to the play, I am likewise yet to learn. The most popular of the theatres were on the Bank-side; and we are told, by the satirical pamphleteers of the time, that the usual mode of conveyance to these places of amusement was by water; but not a single writer so much as hints at the custom of riding to them, or at the practice of having horses held during the hours of exhibition. Some allusion to this usage (if it had existed) must, I think, have been discovered in the course of our researches after contemporary fashions. Let it be remembered too, that we receive this tale on no higher authority than that of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*, vol. I. p. 130. "Sir William Davenant told it to Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe," who (according to Dr. Johnson) related

ligence concerning a poet to whose works he might justly think himself under the strongest obligations. Notwithstanding this assertion, in the manuscript papers of the late Mr. Oldys, it is said, that one Bowman (according to Chetwood, p. 144, "an actor more than half an age on the London theatres") was unwilling to allow that his associate and contemporary, Betterton, had ever undertaken such a journey. Be this matter as it will, the following particulars, which I shall give in the words of Oldys, are, for aught we know to the contrary, as well authenticated as any of the anecdotes delivered down to us by Rowe.

Mr. Oldys had covered several quires of paper with laborious collections for a regular life of our author. From these I have made the following extracts, which (however trivial) contain the only circumstances that wear the least appearance of novelty or information; the song excepted, which the reader will find in a note on the first scene of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

it to Mr. Pope. Mr. Rowe (if this intelligence be authentic) seems to have concurred with me in opinion, as he forebore to introduce a circumstance so incredible into his life of Shakspeare. As to the book which furnishes the anecdote, not the smallest part of it was the composition of Mr. Cibber, being entirely written by a Mr. Shiells, amanuensis to Dr. Johnson, when his dictionary was preparing for the press. T. Cibber was in the King's-Bench, and accepted of ten guineas from the Booksellers for leave to prefix his name to the work; and it was purposely so prefixed, as to leave the reader in doubt whether himself or his father was the person designed. STEEVENS.

" If

“ If tradition may be trusted, Shakspeare often baited at the Crown Inn or tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and sprightly wit; and her husband, Mr. John Davenant (afterwards mayor of that city), a grave melancholy man, who, as well as his wife, used much to delight in Shakspeare’s pleasant company. Their son, young Will. Davenant (afterwards Sir William), was then a little school-boy in the town, of about seven or eight years old, and so fond also of Shakspeare, that, whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from school to see him. One day an old townsman observing the boy running homeward almost out of breath, asked him, whither he was posting in that heat and hurry? He answered, to see his *god-father* Shakspeare. There’s a good boy, said the other, but have a care that you don’t take *God’s* name in vain. This story Mr. Pope told me at the Earl of Oxford’s table, upon occasion of some discourse which arose about Shakspeare’s monument, then newly erected in Westminster-Abbey; and he quoted Mr. Betterton the player for his authority. I answered, that I thought such a story might have enriched the variety of those choice fruits of observation he has presented us in his preface to the edition he had published of our poet’s works. He replied—“ There might be in the garden of mankind such plants as would seem to pride themselves more in a regular production of their own native fruits, than in having

having the repute of bearing a richer kind by grafting; and this was the reason he omitted it\*."

The same story, without the names of the persons, is printed among the jests of John Taylor, the Water Poet, in his works, folio, 1630, page 184, No. 39; and, with some variations, may be found in one of Hearne's pocket-books†.

"One

\* " — and this was the reason he omitted it."

Mr. Oldys might have added, that *he* was the person who suggested to Mr. Pope the singular course which he pursued in his edition of Shakspeare. "Remember (says Oldys in a MS. note to his copy of Langbaine, article *Shakspeare*) what I observed to my Lord Oxford for Mr. Pope's use, out of Cowley's preface." The observation here alluded to, I believe, is one made by Cowley in his preface, p. 52, edit. 1710. "This has been the case with Shakspeare, Fletcher, Jonson, and many others, part of whose poems I should take the boldness to *prune and lop away*, if the care of replanting them in print did belong to me; neither would I make any scruple to cut off from some the unnecessary young suckers, and from others the old withered branches."—Pope adopted this very unwarrantable idea; striking out from the text of his author whatever he did not like: and Cowley himself has suffered a sort of poetical punishment for having suggested it, the learned bishop of Lichfield having *pruned and lopped away* his beautiful luxuriances, as Pope, on Cowley's suggestion, did those of Shakspeare. MALONE.

† Antony Wood is the first and original author of the anecdote, That Shakspeare, in his journies from Warwickshire



"One of Shakspeare's younger brothers, who lived to a good old age, even some years, as I compute, after the restoration of *King Charles II.* would, in his younger days, come to London, to visit his brother  
Will,

shire to London, used to bait at the Crown-Inn on the west side of the corn-market in Oxford. He says, that Davenant the poet was born in that house in 1606. "His father (he adds) John Davenant, was a sufficient vintner, "kept the tavern now known by the sign of the *Crown*, "and was mayor of the said city in 1621. His mother "was a very beautiful woman, of a good wit and conversation, in which she was imitated by none of her children but by this *William* [the poet]. The father, who "was a very grave and discreet citizen (yet an admirer "and lover of plays and play-makers, especially *Shakspeare*, "who frequented his house in his journies between Warwickshire and London), was of a melancholick disposition, and was seldom or never seen to laugh, in which "he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert "his eldest son, afterwards Fellow of St. John's College, "and a venerable Doctor of Divinity." *Wood Ath. Oxon.* vol. ii. p. 292. edit. 1692. I will not suppose that Shakspeare could have been the father of a Doctor of Divinity who never laughed: but it was always a constant tradition in Oxford, that Shakspeare was the father of Davenant the poet. And I have seen this circumstance expressly mentioned in some of Wood's papers. Wood was well qualified to know these particulars; for he was a townsman of Oxford, where he was born in 1632. Wood says, that Davenant went to school in Oxford. *Ubi supra.*

*Will*, as he called him, and be a spectator of him as an actor in some of his own plays. This custom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramattick entertainments grew the greatest support of our principal, if not of all our theatres, he continued it seems so long after his brother's death, as even to the latter-end of his own life. The curiosity at this time of the most noted actors to learn something from him of his brother, &c. they justly held him in the highest veneration. And it may be well believed, as there

As to the *Crown-Inn*, it still remains as an inn, and is an old decayed house, but probably was once a principal inn in Oxford. It is directly in the road from Stratford to London. In a large upper room, which seems to have been a sort of *Hall* for entertaining a large company, or for accommodating (as was the custom) different parties at once, there was a bow window, with three pieces of excellent painted glass. About eight years ago, I remember visiting this room, and proposing to purchase of the landlord the painted glass, which would have been a curiosity, as coming from Shakspeare's inn. But going thither soon after, I found it was removed; the inn-keeper having communicated my intended bargain to the owner of the house, who began to suspect that he was possessed of a curiosity too valuable to be parted with, or to remain in such a place: and I never could hear of it afterwards. If I remember right, the painted glass consisted of three armorial shields, beautifully stained. I have said so much on this subject, because I think that Shakspeare's old hostelry at Oxford deserves no less respect than Chaucer's *Tabarde* in Southwark. T. WARTON.

was besides a kinsman and descendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor among them (*Charles Hart*. See *Shakspeare's Will*), this opportunity made them greedily inquisitive into every little circumstance, more especially in his dramattick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it seems, was so stricken in years, and, possibly, his memory so weakened with infirmities (which might make him the easier pass for a man of weak intellects) that he could give them but little light into their inquiries; and all that could be recollected from him of his brother *Will*, in that station, was the faint, general, and almost lost ideas he had of having once seen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein being to personate a decrepid old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared so weak and drooping, and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported and carried by another person to a table, at which he was seated among some company who were eating, and one of them sung a song." See the character of *Adam* in *As You Like It*. Act II. Sc. ult.

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"Verses by Ben Jonson and Shakspeare, occasioned by the motto to the Globe-Theatre.—*Totus mundus agit histrionem*."

*Jonson,*

If, but *stage-actors*, all the world displays,  
Where shall we find *spectators* of their plays?

*Shakspeare,*

*Shakspeare.*

Little or much, of what we see, we do;  
We're all both *actors* and *spectators* too.

Poetical Characteristicks, 8vo. MS. vol. I. some time in the Harleian Library; which volume was returned to its owner."

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"Old Mr. Bowman the player reported from Sir William Bishop, that some part of Sir John Falstaff's character was drawn from a townsman of Stratford, who either faithlessly broke a contract, or spitefully refused to part with some land, for a valuable consideration, adjoining to Shakspeare's, in or near that town."

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To these anecdotes I can only add the following:

At the conclusion of the advertisement prefixed to Lintot's edition of Shakspeare's poems, it is said, "That most learned prince and great patron of learning, King James the First, was pleased with his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakspeare; which letter, though now lost, remained long in the hands of Sir William Davenant, as a credible person now living can testify."

Mr. Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Fuller's Worthies, observes, that "the story came from the

T t i j

duke

duke of Buckingham, who had it from Sir William D'Avenant.

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It appears from *Roscius Anglicanus* (commonly called Downes the prompter's book), 1708, that Shakspeare took the pains to instruct Joseph Taylor in the character of *Hamlet*, and John Lowine in that of *King Henry VIII.* STEEVENS.



*\* Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials of the  
SHAKSPERE Family; transcribed from the  
Register-Book of the Parish of Stratford  
upon Avon, Warwickshire.*

JONE †, daughter of John Shakspeare, was baptized  
Sept. 15, 1558.

Margaret, daughter of John Shakspeare, was buried  
April 30, 1563.

WILLIAM †, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized  
April 26, 1564.

Gilbert, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized Oct. 13,  
1566.

Jone §, daughter of John Shakspeare, was baptized  
April 15, 1569.

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakspeare, was bap-  
tized Sept. 28, 1571.

\* With this extract from the register of Stratford, I was  
favoured by the Hon. James West, Esq. STEEVENS,

† She married the ancestor of the Harts of Stratford.

‡ Born April 23, 1564.

§ This seems to be a grand-daughter of the first John.

Richard, son of Mr. John Shakspeare, was baptized  
March 11, 1573.

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakspeare, was buried  
April 4, 1579.

Edmund, son of Mr. John Shakspeare, was baptized  
May 3, 1580.

Elizabeth, daughter of Anthony Shakspeare, of Hamp-  
ton, was baptized Feb. 10, 1583.

Susanna, daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE,  
was baptized May 26, 1583.

Samuel \* and Judith, son and daughter of WILLIAM  
SHAKSPERE, were baptized Feb. 2, 1584.

John Shakspeare and Margery Roberts, were married  
Nov. 25, 1584.

Margery, wife of John Shakspeare, was buried Oct. 29,  
1587.

Ursula, daughter of John Shakspeare, was baptized  
March 11, 1588.

Thomas Greene, alias Shakspeare, was buried March 6,  
1589.

Humphrey, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized  
May 24, 1590.

Philip, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized Sept. 21,  
1591.

Samuel, son of WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, was  
buried August 11, 1596.

Mr. John Shakspeare was buried Sept. 8, 1601.

\* This Samuel, only son of the poet, died aged twelve.

John Hall\*, gent. and Susanna Shakspere, were married June 5, 1607.

Mary Shakspere, widow, was buried Sept. 9, 1608.

Gilbert Shakspere, adolescens, was buried Feb. 3, 1611.

Richard Shakspere was buried Feb. 4, 1612.

\* This gentleman was a physician: he married the poet's eldest daughter.

John Hall = Susanna, daughter and coheirress  
of William Shakspere.

Elizabeth Hall. = Thomas Nash, Esq.

A daughter. = Sir Reginald Forster, of  
Warwickshire.

Franklyn Miller. = Jane Forster.  
of Hide-Hall, co.  
Hertford.

Nicholas Miller. = Mary.

Nicholas Franklyn Miller,  
of Hide-Hall, the only sur-  
viving branch of the family  
of Miller.

This descent appears from the old writings in the possession of that family. I am indebted for it to the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Whalley, the learned editor of the Works of Ben Jonson.

Thomas

Thomas Queeny and \* Judith Shakspere †, were married Feb. 10, 1616.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE †, gentleman, was buried April 25, 1616.

Mrs. Shakspere § was buried Aug. 6, 1623.

\* Judith was the poet's youngest daughter.

† As Shakspere the poet married his wife from Shottery, a village near Stratford, possibly he might become possessor of a remarkable *house* there, as part of her portion; and jointly with his wife convey it as part of their daughter Judith's portion to Thomas Queeny. It is certain that one Queeny, an elderly gentleman, sold it to — Harvey, Esq. of Stockton, near Southam, Warwickshire, father of John Harvey Thursby, Esq. of Abington, near Northampton; and that the aforesaid Harvey sold it again to Samuel Tyler, Esq. whose sisters, as his heirs, now enjoy it.

‡ Died the 23d.

§ The poet's widow. She died at the age of sixty-seven,

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**MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS**

**IN THE**  
**QUIRE OF THE CHURCH**  
**OF**  
**STRATFORD UPON AVON.**

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**HERE** lyeth interred the body of **ANNE**, wife of **WILLIAM SHAKSPERE**, who departed this life the 6th day of August 1623, being of the age of 67 years.

**Ubera tu mater, tu lac vitamque dedisti**  
**Ve mihi pro tanto munere Saxa dabo,**  
**Quam mallet amoveat lapidem bonus angelus**  
**orem**  
**Exuat ut Christi corpus imago tua,**  
**Sed nil vota valent, venias citò Christi, resurget**  
**Clausa jacet tumulo mater, et astra petit.**

**Here**



Here lyeth the body of JOHN HALL, Gent. he marr.  
 SUSANNA, daughter and coheir of WILLIAM SHAK-  
 SPERE, Gent. he deceased November 25, anno  
 1635, aged 60 years.

Hallius hic situs est medica celeberrimus arte,  
 Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei.

Dignus erat meritis qui Nestora vinceret annis  
 In terris omnes, sed rapit æqua dies,

Ne tumulo quid desit adest fidissima conjux,  
 Et vita comitem nunc quoque mortis habet.

Here lyeth the body of SUSANNA, wife of JOHN  
 HALL, Gent. the daughter of WILLIAM SHAK-  
 SPERE, Gent. She deceased the 2d day of July,  
 anno 1649, aged 66.

Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,  
 Wise to salvation was good Mistris Hall.

Something of Shakspeare was in that, but this  
 Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse.

Then, Passenger, ha'st ne're a teare,  
 To weepe with her that wept with all;  
 That wept, yet set her selfe to chere  
 Them up with comforts cordiall.

Her love shall live, her mercy spread,  
 When thou ha'st ne're a tear to shed.

Here

Here resteth the body of THOMAS NASHE, Esquier.  
 He mar: ELIZABETH, the daug: of JOHN HALL,  
 Gentleman: He dyed April 4, anno 1647, aged 53.

Fata manent omnes hunc non virtute carentem,  
 Ut neque divitijs abstulit atra dies.

Abstulit, at referet lux ultima, siste viator,  
 Si peritura paras, per mala parta peris.

On a mural monument in the north wall of the  
 Chancel are the following inscriptions.

Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,  
 Terra tegit, populus maret\*, Olympus habet.

Stay, Passenger, why goest thou soe fast?  
 Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plac't  
 Within this monument; Shakspeare, with whome  
 Quick nature dyed, whose name doth deck the tombe  
 Far more than cost; sith all that he hath writ,  
 Leaues living art but page to serue his witt.

Obijt Anno Domini 1616,

Æt. 43, dæc 23 Apri.

\* *Maret* on the monument should unquestionably have  
 been *maret*.

*Extracts from the Rev. Mr. GRANGER's  
Biographical History of England.*

**The PORTRAITS of SHAKSPERE.**

Vol. I. p. 259. 8vo. Edition.

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, *ad orig. tab. penes D. Harley; Vertue sc. 1721. 4to* \*."

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, &c. *Vertue sc. 1719. Done from the original, now in the possession of Robert Keck of the Inner Temple, Esq. † large h. sh.*"

"WILLIAM

\* "The portrait palmed upon Mr. Pope (I use the words of the late Mr. Oldys in a MS. note to his edition of Langbaine) for an original of Shakspeare, from which he had his fine plate engraven, is evidently a juvenile portrait of K. James I." I am no judge in these matters, but only deliver an opinion, which, if ill-grounded, may be easily overthrown. The portrait, to me, at least, has no traits of Shakspeare. The following observations are from the printed work of Mr. Granger. STEEVENS.

† "It has been said that there never was an original portrait of Shakspeare; but that Sir Thomas Clarges, after

his

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE. *In the possession of John Nicoll, of Southgate, Esq. Houbraken sc. 1747. Illust. Heads.*"

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE; Zoust. p. *From a capital picture in the collection of T. Wright, painter in Covent-Garden. J. Simon f. h. sh. mezz.*"

"This was painted in the reign of Charles II."

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, W. Marshall, sc. *Frontispiece to his poems, 1640. 12mo\*.*" under which are the following lines:

"This

his death, caused a portrait to be drawn for him, from a person who nearly resembled him. Mr. Walpole informs me, that the only original picture of Shakspeare is that which belonged to Mr. Keck, from whom it passed to Mr. Nicoll, whose only daughter married the marquis of Caernarvon. This agrees with what is said in the *Critical Review* for December 1770, in relation to the same portrait, which is there also said to have been "painted either by Richard Burbage, or John Taylor the player, the latter of whom left it by will to Sir William Davenant. After his death, Betterton the actor bought it; and when he died, Mr. Keck of the Temple gave forty guineas for it to Mrs. Barry the actress." Mr. Walpole adds, that Marshall's print is genuine too, and probably drawn from the life."

\* The reader will find a faithful copy of his head prefixed to the will of Shakspeare. There is a small head of Shakspeare in an oval, before his *Rape of Lucrece*, repub-

- " This shadowe is renowned Shakspere's, soule of  
th' age,  
" The applause, delight, the wonder of the stage.  
" Nature herself was proud of his designes,  
" And joy'd to weare the dressing of his lines ;  
" The learned will confess, his works are such,  
" As neither man, nor muse, can prayse to much.  
" For ever live thy fame, the world to tell,  
" Thy like, no age, shall ever paralell."

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE ; *Arlaud del. Duchange sc.*  
410."

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE ; *J. Payne sc. He is re-*  
*presented with a laurel branch in his left hand."*

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE ; *L. du Guernier sc."*

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE ; *small ; with several other*  
*heads, before Jacob's " Lives of the Dramatick Poets,"*  
*1719. 8vo."*

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, *with the heads of Jonson,*  
*Ec. h. sh. mezz."*

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VOL. II. p. 6.

" WILLIAM SHAKSPERE. *Frontispiece to his plays,*  
*Folio 1623, Martin Droeshout, sc."*

lished in 12mo, 1655, with the banishment of Tarquin,  
by John [the son of Philip] Quarles: but it is apparently  
copied from the first folio. STEEVENS.

" From



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*De laistre sculp.*

London Printed for J. Bell, British Library Strand, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> 1786.

“ From this print, the head of Shakspere, prefixed to our present edition, is engraved ; under the original of which are the following commendatory lines :

“ This figure, that thou here see'st put,  
 “ It was for gentle Shakspere cut ;  
 “ Wherein the graver had a strife  
 “ With nature, to out-doo the life.  
 “ O, could he but have drawn his wit  
 “ As well in brasse, as he hath hit  
 “ His face, the print would then surpass  
 “ All that was ever writ in brasse ;  
 “ But, since he cannot, reader, looke  
 “ Not on his picture, but his booke.”

BEN JONSON.

“ This print gives us a truer representation of Shakspere, than several more pompous memorials of him, if the testimony of Ben Jonson may be credited, to whom he was personally known ; unless we suppose that poet to have sacrificed his veracity to the turn of thought in his epigram (*annexed to it*), which is very improbable, as he might have been easily contradicted by several that must have remembered so celebrated a person. The author of a letter from Stratford upon Avon, printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1759, Vol. XXIX. p. 257, informs us, that this head is as much like his monumental effigy as a print can be.”

“ WILLIAM SHAKSPERE ; *R. Earlom f. large octavo. mezz. neat. Engraved for a new Edition of Shakspeare's Works.*”

U u i j

“ This

"This print is said to be from an original by Cornelius Jansen, in the collection of C. Jennens, Esq. but, as it is dated in 1610, before Jansen was in England, it is highly probable that it was not painted by him, at least, that he did not paint it as a portrait of Shakspeare."

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE; *his monument at Stratford; under his bust is the following inscription,*

"Ingenio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,  
"Terra tegit, populus mœret, Olympus habet."

"Stay, passenger, why dost thou go so fast?

"Read, if thou canst, whom envious death has plac'd

"Within this monument; Shakspeare, with whom

"Quick nature dy'd; whose name doth deck the tomb

"Far more than cost; since all that he has writ

"Leaves living art but page to serve his wit."

*Ob. Anno Domini 1616. Æt. 53.*

"*Vertue sc. small h. sh.*"

"*His monument is also done in mezz. by Miller.*"

"WILLIAM SHAKSPERE; *his monument in Westminster-Abbey; two prints h. sh.*"

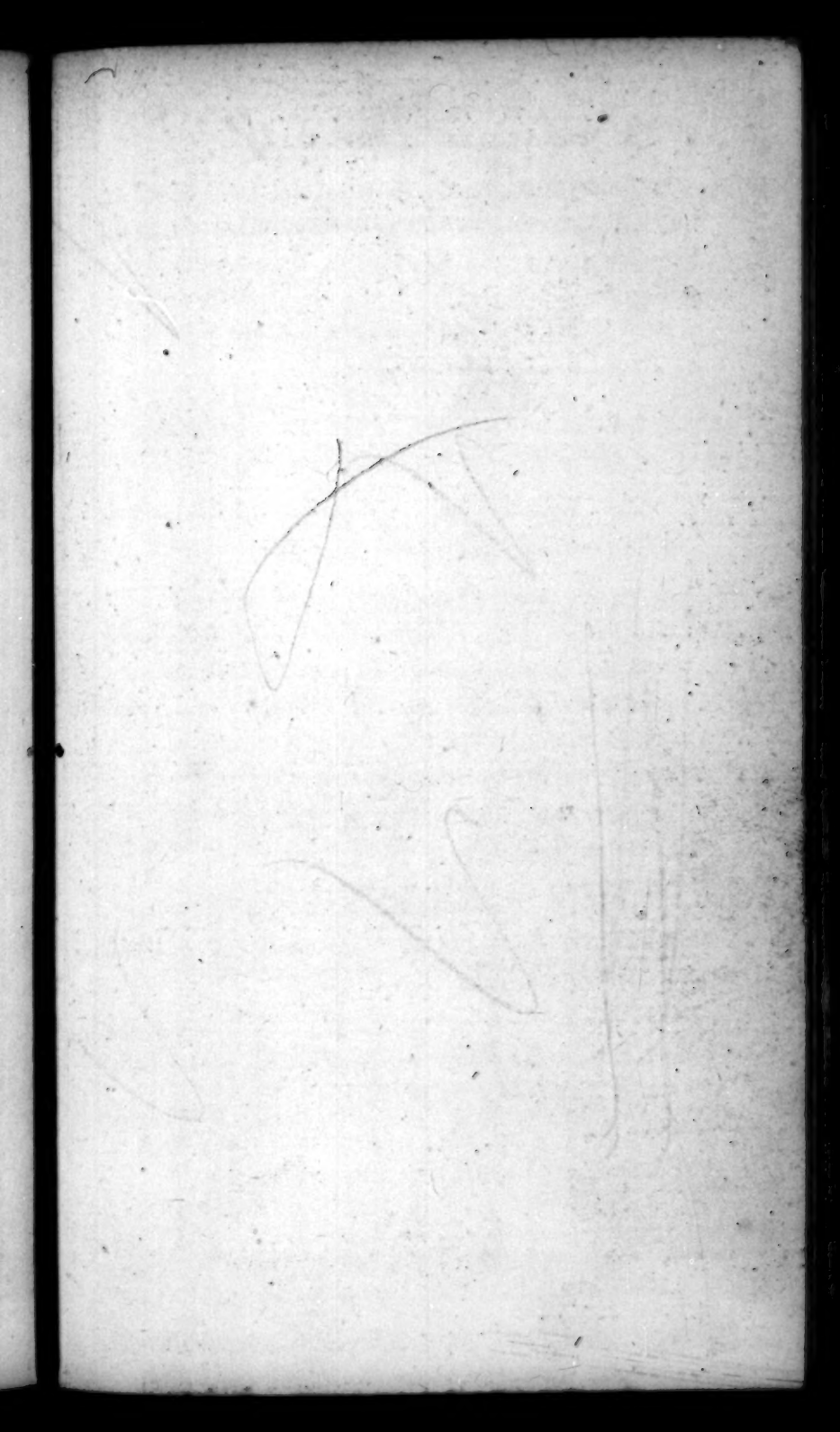
"In one of these prints, instead of *The cloud-capt towers, &c.* is the following inscription on a scroll, to which he points with his finger:

"Thus Britain lov'd me, and preserv'd my fame

"Pure from a Barber's or a Benson's name."

A. POPE.

"This







*Shakspere's Monument in Westminster Abbey*

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library Strand Jan. 12. 1787.

“ This monument was erected in 1741, by the direction of the Earl of Burlington, Dr. Mead, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Martin. Mr. Fleetwood and Mr. Rich \* gave each of them a benefit towards it, from one of Shakspeare’s own plays. It was executed by Scheemaker, after a design of Kent †.”

\* At Drury-Lane was acted Julius Cæsar, 28th April 1738, when a Prologue, written by Benjamin Martyn, Esq. was spoken by Mr. Quin; and an Epilogue by James Noel, Esq. spoken by Mrs. Porter. Both these are printed in the General Dictionary. At Covent-Garden was acted Hamlet, 10th April 1739, when a Prologue, written by Mr. Theobald, and printed in the London Magazine of that year, was spoken by Mr. Ryan. In the Newspaper of the day it was observed, that this last representation was very far from being numerously attended. REED.

† “ On the monument is inscribed—*Amor publicus posuit*. Dr. Mead objected to the word *amor*, as not occurring in old classical inscriptions; but Mr. Pope, and the other gentlemen concerned, insisting that it should stand, Dr. Mead yielded the point, saying,

*Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.*

This anecdote was communicated by Mr. Lort, late Greek professor of Cambridge, who had it from Dr. Mead himself.”

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*The following INSTRUMENT is copied from the Original in the Herald's Office : It is marked G. 13. p. 349.*

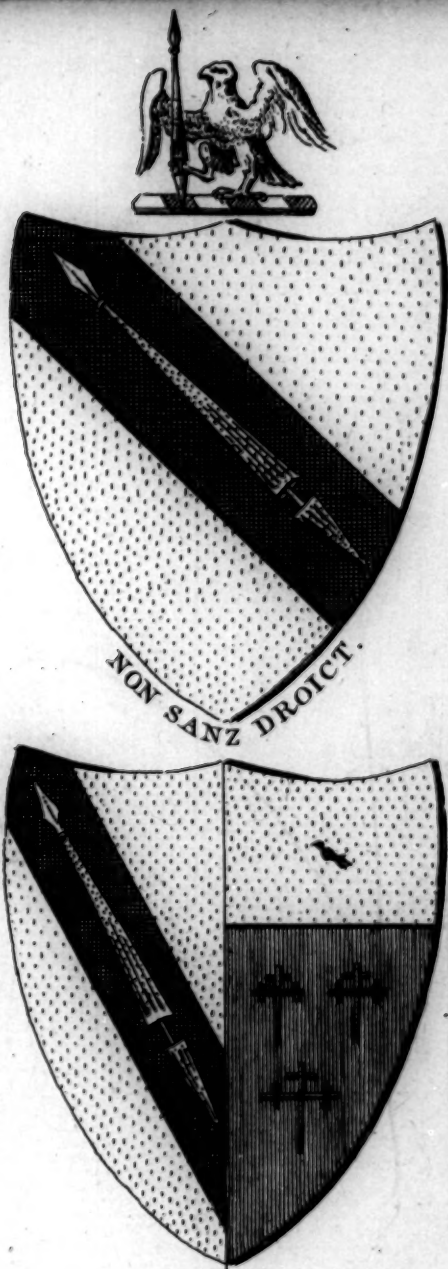
*[There is also a MANUSCRIPT in the Herald's Office\*, marked W. 2. p. 276 ; where Notice is taken of this Coat ; and that the Person, to whom it was granted, had borne Magistracy at Stratford upon Avon.]*

**T**O all and singuler noble and gentlemen of all estats and degrees, bearing arms, to whom these presents shall come, Willam Dethick, Garter Principall King of Arms of England, and Willam Camden, alias Clarencieulx King of Arms for the south, east, and west parts of this realme, sendethe greeting. Know ye, that in all nations and kingdoms the record and

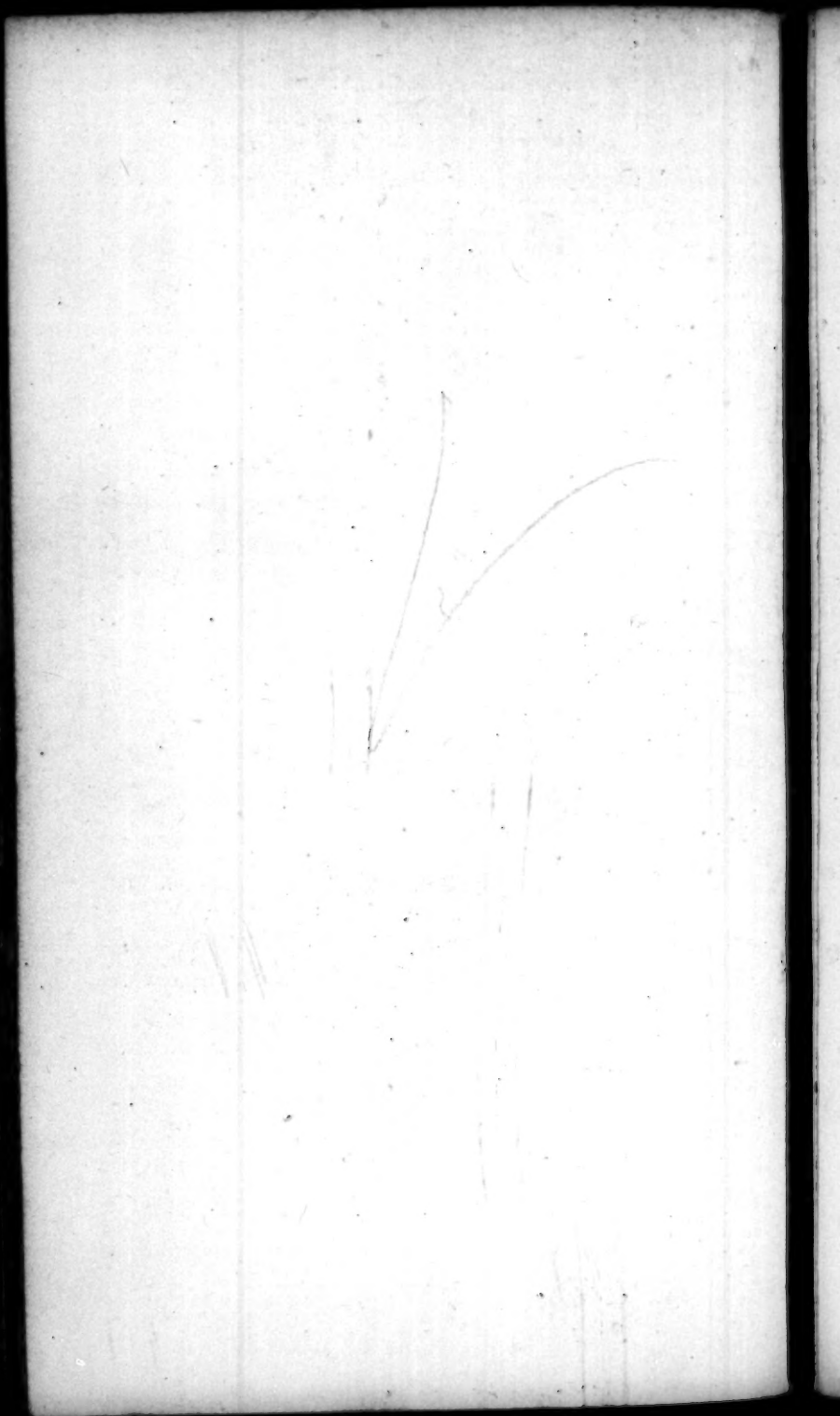
\* It appears by other ancient MSS. in the Herald's Office, that John Shakspeare was a Justice of the Peace, had been Bailiff and chief officer of the town of Stratford upon Avon, and possessed "lands and tenements of good wealth and substance, equal to 500l."

The family of Ardern, into which he had married, was one of the most ancient and respectable in the county of Warwick. F. T.

remembrance



*The Arms of Shakspeare.*





remembraunce of the valeant facts and verteous dispositions of worthie men have been made knowne and divulged by certeyne shields of arms and tokens of chevalrie; the grant and testimonie whereof apperteyneth unto us by vertu of our offices from the Quenes most Exc. Majestie, and her Highenes most noble and victorious progenitors: wherefore being solicited, and by credible report informed that JOHN SHAKSPERE, now of Stratford upon Avon, in the counte of Warwick, gent. whose parent, great grandfather, and late antecessor, for his faithfull and approved service to the late most prudent prince, king Henry VII. of famous memore, was advaunced and rewarded with lands and tenements, geven to him in those parts of Warwickshere, where they have continued by some descents in good reputacion and credit; and for that the said John Shakspeare having maryed the daughter and one of the heysrs of Robert Arden, of Wellingcote in the said countie, and also produced this his auncient cote of arms, heretofore assigned to him whilest he was her Majesties officer and baylefe of that towne. In consideration of the premisses, and for the encouragement of his posterite, unto whom suche blazon of arms and achievements of inheritance from theyre said mother by the auncyent custome and lawes of arms, maye lawfully descend; We the said Garter and Clarencieulx have assigned, graunted, and by these presents exempled unto the said John Shakspeare, and to his posterite, that shield and cote of arms, viz. *In a field of gould upon a bend*  
*sables,*

sables, a speare of the first, the poynt upward, hedded argent; and for his crest or cognizance, *A falcon with his wyngs displayd, standing on a wrethe of his coullers, supporting a speare armed hedded, or steeled sylver*, fyxed uppon a helmet with mantell and tassells, as more playnely maye appeare depected on this margent; and we have likewise uppon on other escucheon impaled the same with the auntyent arms of the said Arden \* of Wellingcote, signifieng therby that it maye and shalbe lawfull for the said John Shakspere, gent. to beare and use the same shield of arms, single or impaled, as aforsaid, during his naturall lyffe; and that it shalbe lawfull for his children, yssue, and posterite (lawfully begotten) to beare, use, and quarter, and show forth the same, with theyre dewe differences, in all lawfull warlyke facts and civile use or exercises, according to the lawes of arms, and custome that to gentlemen belongethe, without let or interruption of

\* It is said by the modern editor of *Arden of Feversham* (first published in 1592, and republished in 1770) that Shakspeare descended by the female line from the gentleman whose unfortunate end is the subject of this tragedy. But the assertion appears to want support, the true name of the person who was murdered at Feversham being *Ardern* and not *Arden*. *Ardern* might be called *Arden* in the play, for the sake of better sound, or might be corrupted in the chronicle of Hollingshed; yet it is unlikely that the true spelling should be overlooked among the Heralds, whose interest it is to recommend, by ostentatious accuracy, the trifles in which they deal. STEEVENS.

any

any person or persons, for use or bearing the same. In wyttnesse and testemonye wherof we have subscribed our names, and fastened the seals of our offices, geven at the Office of Arms, London, the  
daye of                      in the xlii yere of the  
reigne of our most gracious Sovraigne Ladye Elizabeth, by the grace of God Quene of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. 1559.

SHAKSPERE'S

# SHAKSPERE's WILL,

Extracted from the Registry of the ARCHBISHOP of  
CANTERBURY.

*Vicesimo quinto die Martii, Anno Regni Domini nostri  
Jacobi nunc Regis Angliæ, &c. decimo quarto, & Scotiæ  
quadragesimo nono. Anno Domini 1616.*

**I**N the name of God, Amen. I William Shakspeare, of Stratford upon Avon, in the county of Warwick, gent. in perfect health and memory (God be praised), do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following; that is to say:

*First*, I commend my soul into the hands of God my Creator, hoping, and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting; and my body to the earth whereof that is made.

*Item*, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds of lawful English money, to be paid unto her in manner and form following; that is to say, one hundred pounds in discharge of her marriage portion, within one year after

my



WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

London Printed for J. Bell British Library Strand Sep<sup>r</sup> 3<sup>th</sup> 1786.



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my decease, with considerations after the rate of two shillings in the pound for so long time as the same shall be unpaid unto her after my decease; and the fifty pounds residue thereof, upon her surrendering of, or giving of such sufficient security as the overseers of this my will shall like of, to surrender or grant all her estate and right that shall descend or come unto her after my decease, or that she now hath of, in, or to, one copyhold tenement, with the appurtenances, lying and being in Stratford upon Avon, aforesaid, in the said county of Warwick, being parcel or holden of the manor of Rowington, unto my daughter Susanna Hall, and her heirs for ever.

*Item*, I give and bequeath unto my said daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds more, if she, or any issue of her body, be living at the end of three years next ensuing the day of the date of this my will, during which time my executors to pay her consideration from my decease according to the rate aforesaid: and, if she die within the said term, without issue of her body, then my will is, and I do give and bequeath one hundred pounds thereof to my niece Elizabeth Hall, and the fifty pounds to be set forth by my executors during the life of my sister Joan Harte, and the use and profit thereof coming, shall be paid to my said sister Joan, and after her decease the said fifty pounds shall remain amongst the children of my said sister, equally to be divided amongst them; but if my said daughter Judith be living at the end of the said three years, or any issue of her body, then  
my

my will is, and so I devise and bequeath the said hundred and fifty pounds to be set out by my executors and overseers for the best benefit of her and her issue, and the stock not to be paid unto her so long as she shall be married and covert baron; but my will is, that she shall have the consideration yearly paid unto her during her life, and after her decease the said stock and consideration to be paid to her children, if she have any, and if not, to her executors and assigns, she living the said term after my decease; provided that if such husband as she shall at the end of the said three years be married unto, or at and after, do sufficiently assure unto her, and the issue of her body, land answerable to the portion by this my will given unto her, and to be adjudged so by my executors and overseers, then my will is, that the said hundred and fifty pounds shall be paid to such husband as shall make such assurance, to his own use.

*Item,* I give and bequeath unto my said sister Joan twenty pounds, and all my wearing apparel, to be paid and delivered within one year after my decease; and I do will and devise unto her the house, with the appurtenances, in Stratford, wherein she dwelleth, for her natural life, under the yearly value of twelve pence.

*Item,* I give and bequeath unto her three sons, William Hart, ——— Hart, and Michael Hart, five pounds a piece, to be paid within one year after my decease.

*Item*, I give and bequeath unto the said Elizabeth Hall, all my plate that I now have, except my broad silver and gilt boxes, at the date of this my will.

*Item*, I give and bequeath unto the poor of Stratford aforesaid ten pounds; to Mr. Thomas Combe my sword; to Thomas Russel, esq. five pounds; and to Francis Collins of the borough of Warwick, in the coupty of Warwick, gent. thirteen pounds six shillings and eight-pence, to be paid within one year after my decease.

*Item*, I give and bequeath to Hamlet Sadler twenty-six shillings eight-pence to buy him a ring; to William Reynolds, gent. twenty-six shillings eight-pence to buy him a ring; to my godson William Walker twenty shillings in gold; to Anthony Nash, gent. twenty-six shillings eight-pence; and to Mr. John Nash twenty-six shillings eight-pence; and to my fellows John Heminge, Richard Burbage\*, and Henry Condell, twenty-six shillings eight-pence apiece, to buy them rings.

*Item*, I give, will, bequeath, and devise unto my daughter Susanna Hall, for the better enabling of

\* It appears from the registers in Doctors-Commons, that Burbage died in 1629. The wills of Heminge and Condell I could not meet with, though I sought for them as low as the year 1641. Several wills indeed I found with the names of J. Heminge and Henry Condell annexed, but they contain nothing characteristick of Shakspeare's associates. STEEVENS.

her to perform this my will, and towards the performance thereof, all that capital messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, in Stratford aforesaid, called The New Place, wherein I now dwell, and two messuages or tenements, with the appurtenances, situate, lying, and being in Henley-Street, within the borough of Stratford aforesaid; and all my barns, stables, orchards, gardens, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever, situate, lying, and being, or to be had, reserved, preserved, or taken within the towns, hamlets, villages, fields, and grounds of Stratford upon Avon, Old Stratford, Bushaxton, and Welcombe, or in any of them, in the said county of Warwick; and also all that messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, situate, lying, and being in the Black-Friars in London, near the Wardrobe; and all other my lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever; to have and to hold all and singular the said premises, with their appurtenances, unto the said Susanna Hall, for and during the term of her natural life; and, after her decease, to the first son of her body lawfully issuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the said first son lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to the second son of her body lawfully issuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the said second son lawfully issuing; and for default of such heirs, to the third son of the body of the said Susanna lawfully issuing, and of the heirs males of the body of the said third son lawfully issuing; and for default

of

of such issue, the same to be and remain to the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh sons of her body, lawfully issuing one after another, and to the heirs males of the bodies of the said fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh sons lawfully issuing, in such manner as it is before limited to be, and remain to the first, second, and third sons of her body, and to their heirs males; and for default of such issue, the said premises to be and remain to my said niece Hall, and the heirs males of her body lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to my daughter Judith, and the heirs males of her body lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to the right heirs of me the said William Shakspeare for ever.

*Item*, I give unto my wife my brown best bed with the furniture \*.

*Item*, I give and bequeath to my said daughter Judith my broad silver gilt bole. All the rest of my

\* It appears, in the original will of Shakspeare (now in the Prerogative-Office, Doctor-Commons) that he had forgot his wife; the legacy to her being expressed by an interlineation, as well as those to Heminge, Burbage, and Condell.

The will is written on three sheets of paper, the two last of which are undoubtedly subscribed with Shakspeare's own hand. The first indeed has his name in the margin, but it differs somewhat in spelling as well as manner from the two signatures that follow. The reader will find a fac-simile of all the three, as well as those of the witnesses, over-leaf. STEEVENS.



goods, chattels, leases, plate, jewels, and household-stuff whatsoever, after my debts and legacies paid, and my funeral expences discharged, I give, devise, and bequeath to my son-in-law, John Hall, gent. and my daughter Susanna, his wife, who I ordain and make executors of this my last will and testament. And I do entreat and appoint the said Thomas Russel, esq. and Francis Collins, gent. to be overseers hereof. And do revoke all former wills, and publish this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand, the day and year first above-written, by me

William Shakspeare.

*Witness to the publishing hereof,*

Fra. Collins,  
Julius Shaw,  
John Robinson,  
Hamlet Sadler,  
Robert Whattcott.

*Probatum coram Magistro William Byrde, Legum Doctore Commissario, &c. vicesimo secundo die mensis Junii, Anno Domini 1616. Juramento Johannis Hall unius ex. et cui, &c. de bene et Jurat Reservata potestate et Susannæ Hall alt. ex. &c. cui vendit, &c. petitur.*

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John Robinson

Samuel Sadler

Robert W. Catlett



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T H E  
*DEDICATION of the PLAYERS,*  
 T O T H E  
 MOST NOBLE AND INCOMPARABLE PAIRE  
 OF BRETHREN,

*W I L L I A M,*  
 Earle of PEMBROKE, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the  
 King's Most Excellent Majestie ;

A N D  
*P H I L I P,*  
 Earle of MONTGOMERY, &c. Gentleman of his  
 Majesties Bed-Chamber ;  
*Both Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and*  
*our singular good LORDS.*

---

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

WHILST we studie to be thankful in our particular,  
 for the many favours we have received from your  
 L. L. we are false upon the ill-fortune, to mingle two  
 the most diverse things that can be, feare, and rash-  
 nesse; rashnesse in the enterprize, and feare of the  
 successe. For, when we value the places your H. H.  
 sustaine, wee cannot but know the dignity greater,  
 than to descend to the reading of these trifles: and,  
 while we name them trifles, we have deprived our-



selves of the defence of our dedication. But since your L. L. have been pleased to thinke these trifles something, heeretofore; and have prosecuted both them, and their authour living, with so much favour: we hope (that they out living him, and he not having the fate, common with some, to be exequutor to his owne writings) you will use the same indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any booke choose his patrones, or finde them: this hath done both. For, so much were you L. L. likings of the severall parts, when they were acted, as before they were published, the volume asked to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphanes, guardians; without ambition either of selfe-profit, or fame; onely to keep the memory of so worthy a friend, and fellow alive, as was our SHAKSPERE, by humble offer of his playes, to your most noble patronage. Wherein, as we have justly observed, no man to come neere your L. L. but with a kind of religious addresse; it hath been the height of our care, who are the presenters, to make the present worthy of your H. H. by the perfection. But, there we must also crave our abilities to be considered, my Lords. We cannot goe beyond our owne powers. Country hands reach forth milke, creame, fruits, or what they have: and many nations (we have heard) that had not gummess and incense, obtained their requests with a leavened cake. It was no fault to approach their gods by what meanes they could:

and

and the most, though meanest of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to temples. In that name, therefore, we most humbly consecrate to your H. H. these remaines of your servant SHAKSPERE; that what delight is in them may be ever your L. L. the reputation his, and the fault ours, if any be committed, by a paire so carefull to shew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is

*Your Lordshippes most bounden,*

JOHN HEMINGE.

HENRY CONDELL.

COMMENT-

COMMENDATORY VERSES

ON  
SHAKSPERE.

*Upon the Effigies of my worthy Friend, the Author, Master  
WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, and his Works.*

SPECTATOR, this life's shadow is—to see  
The truer image, and a livelier he.  
Turn reader : but observe his comick vein,  
Laugh ; and proceed next to a tragick strain,  
Then weep : so—when thou find'st two contraries,  
Two different passions from thy rapt soul rise—  
Say (who alone effect such wonders could),  
Rare Shakspeare to the life thou dost behold. B. J.

*To the Memory of my beloved, the Author,  
Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, and what he hath  
left us.*

To draw no envy, Shakspeare, on thy name,  
Am I thus ample to thy book, and fame ;  
While I confess thy writings to be such,  
As neither man, nor muse, can praise too much ;  
'Tis

'Tis true, and all men's suffrage: but these ways  
 Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;  
 For seeliest ignorance on these may light,  
 Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;  
 Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance  
 The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance:  
 Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,  
 And think to ruin, where it seem'd to raise:  
 These are as some infamous bawd, or whore,  
 Should praise a matron; what could hurt her more?  
 But thou art proof against them; and, indeed,  
 Above the ill-fortune of them, or the need:  
 I, therefore, will begin:—Soul of the age,  
 The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage,  
 My Shakspeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by  
 Chaucer, or Spenser; or bid Beaumont lie  
 A little further, to make thee a room\*:  
 Thou art a monument, without a tomb;

And

\* This and the next lines have reference to the following epitaph on Shakspeare, written by *Dr. Donne*, and printed among his poems:

“Renowned *Spenser*, lie a thought more nigh †

“To learned *Chaucer*, and rare *Beaumont* lie

† The Epitaph on Shakspeare beginning,

“Renowned *Spenser*, lie a thought more nigh”——

is subscribed, in an edition of his poems printed in 1640, with the letters W. B. which, I learn from the MS. notes of Mr. Oldys, were placed for William Basse. I have not found these verses in any edition of Dr. Donne's works.

MALONE.

“A little

And art alive still, while thy book doth live,  
 And we have wits to read, and praise to give.  
 That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses;  
 I mean, with great, but disproportion'd Muses:  
 For, if I thought my judgment were of years,  
 I should commit thee surely with thy peers;  
 And tell—how far thou didst our Lilly \* outshine,

“ A little nearer *Spenser*, to make room

“ For *Shakspeare* in your threefold, fourfold tomb.

“ To lie all four in one bed make a shift,

“ Until doomsday; for hardly will a fifth

“ Betwixt this day and that, by fates be slain,

“ For whom your curtains need be drawn again.

“ But if precedency in death doth bar

“ A fourth place in your sacred sepulchre,

“ Under this curled marble of thine own,

“ Sleep, rare tragedian; *Shakspeare*, sleep alone!

“ Thy unmolested peace, in an unshar'd cave,

“ Possess as lord, not tenant of thy grave;

“ That, unto us, and others it may be

“ Honour, hereafter to be laid by thee!”

STEEVENS.

\* *Lilly* wrote nine plays during the reign of Q. Eliz. viz. *Alexander and Campaspe*, *T. C. Endymion*, *C. Galatea*, *C. Love his Metamorphosis*, *Dram. Past. Maid her Metamorphosis*, *C. Mother Bombie*, *C. Mydas*, *C. Sapho and Phao*, *C. and Woman in the Moon*, *C.* To the pedantry of this author, perhaps, we are indebted for the first attempt to polish and reform our language. See his *Euphuet*, and his *England*.

STEEVENS.

Of

Or sporting Kyd \*, or Marlow's mighty line †.  
 And, though thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek—  
 From thence to honour thee, I would not seek  
 For names; but call forth thund'ring Æschylus,  
 Euripides, and Sophocles, to us,  
 Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead;  
 To live again, to hear thy buskin tread

\* — or *sporting Kyd*.] It appears from Heywood's *Actor's Vindication*, that Thomas Kyd was the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*. The late Mrs. Hawkins was of opinion that *Soliman and Perseda* was by the same hand. The only piece, however, which has descended to us, even with the initial letters of his name affixed to it, is *Pompey the Great his fair Cornelia's Tragedy*, which was first published in 1594, and, with some alteration in the title-page, again in 1595. This is no more than a translation from Robert Garnier, a French poet, who distinguished himself during the reigns of Charles IX. Henry III. and Henry IV. and died at Mans in 1602, in the 56th year of his age.

STEEVENS.

† — or *Marlow's mighty line*.] Marlow was a performer as well as an author. His contemporary Heywood calls him *the best of poets*. He wrote six tragedies, viz. *Dr. Faustus's Tragical History*; *K. Edward II.* *Jew of Malta*; *Lust's Dominion*; *Massacre of Paris*; and *Tamburlaine the Great*, in two parts. He likewise joined with Nash in writing *Dido Queen of Carthage*, and had begun a translation of Musæus's *Hero and Leander*, which was finished by Chapman, and published in 1600. STEEVENS.

And



And shake a stage : or, when thy socks were on,  
Leave thee alone—for the comparison  
Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome,  
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.  
Triumph, my Britain ! thou hast one to show,  
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.  
He was not of an age, but for all time,  
And all the Muses still were in their prime,  
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm  
Our ears, or, like a Mercury, to charm.  
Nature herself was proud of his designs,  
And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines ;  
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,  
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit :  
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,  
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please ;  
But antiquated and deserted lie,  
As they were not of Nature's family.  
Yet must I not give nature all ; thy art,  
My gentle Shakspeare, must enjoy a part :—  
For though the poet's matter nature be,  
His art doth give the fashion : and that he,  
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat  
(Such as thine are), and strike a second heat  
Upon the Muses' anvil ; turn the same  
(And himself with it), that he thinks to frame ;  
Or, for the laurel, he may gain a scorn—  
For a good poet's made, as well as born :  
And such wert thou : Look, how the father's face  
Lives in his issue ; even so the race

Of Shakspeare's mind, and manners, brightly shines  
 In his well-toned and true-filed lines;  
 In each of which he seems to shake a lance,  
 As brandish'd at the eyes of ignorance.  
 Sweet swan of Avon, what a sight it were,  
 To see thee in our waters yet appear;  
 And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,  
 That so did take Eliza, and our James!  
 But stay; I see thee in the hemisphere  
 Advanc'd, and made a constellation there:—  
 Shine forth, thou star of poets! and with rage,  
 Or influence, chide, or cheer, the drooping stage;  
 Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourn'd  
     like night,  
 And despairs day, but by thy volume's light!

BEN JONSON\*.

*Upon*

\* ——— *extinctus amabitur idem.*

This observation of *Horace* was never more completely verified than by the posthumous applause which *Ben Jonson* has bestowed on *Shakspeare*:

——— the gracious *Duncan*

Was pitied of *Macbeth*:—marry, he was dead.

Let us now compare the present eulogium of old *Ben* with such of his other sentiments as have reached posterity.

In 1748, when the *Lover's Melancholy*, by *Ford* (a friend and contemporary of *Shakspeare*), was revived for a benefit, the following letter appeared in the *General*, now the *Public Advertiser*, April 23:

Y y

— It

*Upon the Lines, and Life, of the famous Scenick Poet,*

*Master WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.*

Those hands, which you so clapt, go now and wring,  
You Britons brave; for done are Shakspeare's days;  
His days are done, that made the dainty plays,

Which

— It is hoped that the following *gleaning of theatrical history* will readily obtain a place in your paper. It is taken from a pamphlet written in the reign of Charles I. with this quaint title, "*Old Ben's Light Heart made heavy by Young John's Melancholy Lover*;" and, as it contains some historical anecdotes and altercations concerning *Ben Jonson, Ford, Shakspeare, and the Lover's Melancholy*, it is imagined that a few extracts from it at this juncture will not be unentertaining to the public.

Those who have any knowledge of the theatre in the reigns of *James* and *Charles* the First, must know, that *Ben Jonson*, from great critical language, which was then the portion of but very few, his merit as a poet, and his constant association with men of letters, did, for a considerable time, give laws to the stage.

*Ben* was by nature *splenetic and sour*; with a share of envy (for every anxious genius has some), more than was warrantable in society. By education rather critically than politely learned; which swell'd his mind into an ostentatious pride of his own works, and an overbearing inexorable judgment of his contemporaries.

: This

Which made the globe of heaven and earth to ring:  
 Dry'd is that vein, dry'd is the Thespian spring,  
 Turn'd all to tears, and Phœbus clouds his rays ;  
 That

‘ This raised him many enemies, who, towards the close of his life, endeavoured to dethrone *this tyrant*, as the pamphlet stiles him, out of the dominion of the theatre. And what greatly contributed to their design, was the *slights* and *malignances* which the *rigid Ben* too frequently threw out against the *lowly Shakspeare*, whose fame since his death, as appears by the pamphlet, was grown too great for *Ben's* envy either to bear with or wound.

‘ It would greatly exceed the limits of your paper to set down all the *contempts* and *invectives* which were uttered and written by *Ben*, and are collected and produced in *this pamphlet*, as unanswerable and shaming evidences to prove his *ill-nature* and *ingratitude* to *Shakspeare*, who first introduced him to the *theatre and fame*.

‘ But, though the whole of these invectives cannot be set down at present, some few of the heads may not be disagreeable, which are as follow :

“ That the man had *imagination* and *wit* none could deny, but that they were *ever* guided by *true judgment* in the *rules* and *conduct* of a piece, none could with justice assert, *both* being ever servile to raise the *laughter of fools* and the *wonder of the ignorant*. That he was a good poet only in *part*—being ignorant of *all dramattick laws*—had *little Latin*—*less Greek*—and speaking of plays, &c.

“ To make a child new swaddled, to proceed

“ Man, and then shoot up, in one beard and weed,

Y y ij

“ Past

That corpse, that coffin, now bestick those bays,  
Which crown'd him poet first, then poets' king!

If

" Past threescore years : or, with three rusty swords,

" And help of some few *foot and half-foot* words,

" Fight, over *York* and *Lancaster's* long jars,

" And in the tiring-house bring wounds to scars.

" He rather prays you will be pleas'd to see

" One such to-day, as *other plays should be* ;

" Where neither *chorus* wafts you o'er the seas, &c."

' Thus, and such like behaviour, brought *Ben* at last from being the *lawgiver* of the theatre to be the *ridicule* of it, being *personally* introduced there in several pieces, to the *satisfaction* of the public, who are ever fond of encouraging *personal* ridicule, when the follies and vices of the object are supposed to deserve it.

' But what wounded his pride and fame most sensibly, was the preference which the public, and most of his contemporary wits, gave to *Ford's* *LOVER'S MELANCHOLY*, before his *NEW INN* or *LIGHT HEART*. They were both brought on in the *same week* and on the same stage; where *Ben's* was damn'd, and *Ford's* received with *uncommon applause*: and what made this circumstance still more galling was, that *Ford* was at the head of the partisans who supported *Shakspeare's* fame against *Ben Jonson's* *invectives*.

' This so incensed old *Ben*, that, as an everlasting stigma upon his audience, he prefixed this title to his play—  
" The *New Inn* or *Light Heart*. A comedy, as it was *never acted*, but most negligently play'd by some, the *King's* *idle servants*; and more squeamishly beheld and censured by others,



If tragedies might any prologue have,  
 All those he made would scarce make one to this;  
 Where

others, the *King's foolish subjects*." This title is followed by an abusive preface upon the audience and reader.

Immediately upon this, he wrote his memorable ode against the public, beginning—

"Come, leave the loathed stage,  
 "And the more loathsome age, &c."

The revenge he took against *Ford*, was to write an epigram on him as a plagiarist.

"Playwright, by chance, hearing toys I had writ,  
 "Cry'd to my face—they were th' elixir of wit.  
 "And I must now believe him, for to-day  
 "Five of my jests, then stoln, pass'd him a play."

Alluding to a character in the *Ladies Trial*, which *Ben* says *Ford* stole from him.

'The next charge against *Ford* was, that the *Lover's Melancholy* was not his own, but purloined from *Shakspeare's papers* by the connivance of *Heminge and Condell*, who, in conjunction with *Ford*, had the revisal of them.'

'The malice of this charge is gravely refuted, and afterwards laughed at in many verses and epigrams, the best of which are those that follow, with which I shall close this theatrical extract:

"To my worthy friend, *John Ford*,  
 "'Tis said, from *Shakspeare's* mine, your play you drew,  
 "What need?—when *Shakspeare* still survives in you:

Y y i j

"But



Where fame, now that he gone is to the grave,  
 (Death's publick tiring-house) the Nuntius is :

For,

" But grant it were from his vast treasury reft,  
 " That *plund'rer Ben* ne'er made so rich a theft."

Thomas May.

Upon *Ben Jonson*, and his Zany, *Tom Randolph*.

" Quoth *Ben* to *Tom*, the *Lover's* stole,

" 'Tis *Shakspeare's* every word ;

" Indeed, says *Tom*, upon the whole,

" 'Tis much too good for *Ford*.

" Thus *Ben* and *Tom* the dead still praise,

" The living to decry ;

" For none must dare to wear the bays,

" Till *Ben* and *Tom* both die.

" Even *Avon's* swan could not escape

" These letter-tyrant elves ;

" They on his fame contriv'd a rape,

" To raise their pedant selves.

" But after-times, with full consent,

" This truth will all acknowledge—

" *Shakspeare* and *Ford* from heaven were sent,

" But *Ben* and *Tom* from college.

*Endymion Porter.*"

Mr. Macklin the comedian was the author of this letter ;  
 but the pamphlet which furnished his materials was lost in  
 its passage from Ireland.

The

For, though his line of life went soon about,  
The life yet of his lines shall never out.

HUGH HOLLAND \*.

*To the Memory of the deceased Author, Master WILLIAM*  
**SHAKSPERE.**

Shakspere, at length thy pious fellows give  
The world thy works; thy works, by which outlive  
Thy tomb, thy name must: when that stone is rent,  
And time dissolves thy Stratford monument,  
Here we alive shall view thee still, this book,  
When brass and marble fade, shall make thee look  
Fresh to all ages; when posterity  
Shall loath what's new, think all is prodigy  
That is not Shakspere's, every line, each verse,  
Here shall revive, redeem thee from thy herse.  
Nor fire, nor cank'ring age—as Naso said  
Of his—thy wit-fraught book shall once invade:

The following stanza, from a copy of verses by Shirley,  
prefixed to Ford's *Love's Sacrifice*, 1633, alludes to the same  
dispute, and is apparently addressed to Ben Jonson.

“ Look here *thou* that hast *malice* to the stage,  
“ And *impudence* enough for the whole age;  
“ *Voluminously ignorant!* be vext  
“ To read this tragedy, and thy owne be next.”

STEEVENS.

\* See Wood's *Athenæ Oxon.* edit. 1721, vol. i. p. 583.

Nor

Nor shall I e'er believe or think thee dead,  
 Though mist, until our bankrout stage be sped  
 (Impossible) with some new strain to out-do  
 Passions of Juliet, and her Romeo;  
 Or till I hear a scene more nobly take,  
 Than when thy half-sword parlying Romans spake;  
 Till these, till any of thy volumes rest,  
 Shall with more fire more feeling be express'd,  
 Be sure, our Shakspeare, thou canst never die,  
 But, crown'd with laurel, live eternally.

L. DIGGES\*.

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*To the Memory of Master WILLIAM SHAKSPERE,*

We wonder'd, Shakspeare, that thou went'st so soon  
 From the world's stage to the grave's tyring-room:  
 We thought thee dead; but this thy printed worth  
 Tells thy spectators, that thou went'st but forth  
 To enter with applause: an actor's art  
 Can die, and live to act a second part;  
 That's but an exit of mortality,  
 This a re-entrance to a plaudite,

J. M†.

\* See Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, vol. i. p. 599, and 600, edit. 1721. His translation of Claudian's Rape of Proserpine was entered on the Stationers' books, Oct. 4, 1617.

† Perhaps John Marston,

*On worthy Master SHAKSPERE, and his Poems.*

A mind reflecting ages past, whose clear  
And equal surface can make things appear,  
Distant a thousand years, and represent  
Them in their lively colours, just extent:  
To out-run hasty Time, retrieve the fates,  
Rowl back the heavens, blow ope the iron gates  
Of death and Lethe, where confused lie  
Great heaps of ruinous mortality:  
In that deep dusky dungeon, to discern  
A royal ghost from churls; by art to learn  
The physiognomy of shades, and give  
Them sudden birth, wond'ring how oft they live;  
What story coldly tells, what poets feign  
At second-hand, and picture without brain,  
Senseless and soul-less shews: To give a stage—  
Ample, and true with life—voice, action, age,  
As Plato's year, and new scene of the world,  
Them unto us, or us to them had hurl'd;  
To raise our ancient sovereigns from their herse,  
Make kings his subjects; by exchanging verse  
Enlive their pale trunks, that the present age  
Joys in their joy, and trembles at their rage:  
Yet so to temper passion, that our ears  
Take pleasure in their pain, and eyes in tears  
Both smile and weep; fearful at plots so sad,  
Then laughing at our fear; abus'd, and glad  
To be abus'd; affected with that truth  
Which we perceive is false, pleased in that ruth

At

At which we start, and, by elaborate play,  
Tortur'd and tickl'd ; by a crab-like way  
Time past made pastime, and in ugly sort  
Disgorging up his raving for our sport :  
— While the plebeian imp, from lofty throne,  
Creates and rules a world, and works upon  
Mankind by secret engines ; now to move  
A chilling pity, then a rigorous love ;  
To strike up and stroke down, both joy and ire ;  
To steer the affections ; and by heavenly fire  
Mould us anew, stol'n from ourselves :—

This—and much more, which cannot be express'd  
But by himself, his tongue, and his own breast—  
Was Shakspeare's freehold ; which his cunning brain  
Improv'd by favour of the nine-fold train ;  
The buskin'd muse, the comick queen, the grand  
And louder tone of Clio, nimble hand,  
And nimbler foot of the melodious pair,  
The silver-voiced lady, the most fair  
Calliope, whose speaking silence daunts,  
And she whose praise the heavenly body chants.

These jointly woo'd him, envying one another ;—  
Obey'd by all as spouse, but lov'd as brother ;—  
And wrought a curious robe, of sable grave,  
Fresh green, and pleasant yellow, red most brave,  
And constant blue, rich purple, guiltless white,  
The lowly russet, and the scarlet bright :  
Branch'd and embroider'd like the painted spring ;  
Each leaf match'd with a flower, and each string  
Of golden wire, each line of silk ; there run  
Italian works, whose thread the sisters spun ;

And

And there did sing, or seem to sing, the choice  
Birds of a foreign note and various voice:  
Here hangs a mossy rock; there plays a fair,  
But chiding fountain, purl'd: not the air,  
Nor clouds, nor thunder, but were living drawn;  
Not out of common tiffany or lawn,  
But fine materials, which the Muses know,  
And only know the countries where they grow.

Now, when they could no longer him enjoy,  
In mortal garments pent—death may destroy,  
They say, his body; but his verse shall live,  
And more than nature takes our hands shall give:  
In a less volume, but more strongly bound,  
Shakspeare shall breathe and speak; with laurel  
crown'd,

Which never fades; fed with ambrosial meat,  
In a well-lined vesture, rich, and neat:  
So with this robe they clothe him, bid him wear it;  
For Time shall never stain, nor Envy tear it.

*The friendly Admirer of his Endowments,*

J. M. S.

*Upon Master WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, the deceased  
Authour, and his Poems.*

Poets are born, not made. When I would prove  
This truth, the glad remembrance I must love  
Of never-dying Shakspeare, who alone  
Is argument enough to make that one.

First,



First, that he was a poet, none would doubt  
 That heard the applause of what he sees set out  
 Imprinted; where thou hast (I will not say,  
 Reader, his *works*, for, to contrive a play,  
 To him 'twas none), the pattern of all wit,  
 Art without art, unparallel'd as yet.  
 Next Nature only help'd him, for look thorough  
 This whole book \*, thou shalt find he doth not borrow  
 One phrase from Greeks, nor Latins imitate,  
 Nor once from vulgar languages translate;  
 Nor plagiary-like from others gleane,  
 Nor begs he from each witty friend a scene  
 To piece his acts with: all that he doth write  
 Is pure his own; plot, language, exquisite.  
 But O what praise more powerful can we give  
 The dead, than that, by him, the *king's-men* live,  
 His players, which should they but have shar'd his  
 fate  
 (All else expir'd within the short term's date),  
 How could *The Globe* have prosper'd, since through  
 want  
 Of change, the plays and poems had grown scant.  
 But, happy verse, thou shalt be sung and hear'd  
 When hungry quills shall be such honour barr'd.  
 Then vanish, upstart writers to each stage,  
 You needy poetasters of this age!

\* From this and the following lines it appears that these  
 verses were intended to be prefixed to the folio edition of  
 our author's plays. MALONE.

Where Shakspeare liv'd or spake, Vermin forbear,  
 Lest with your froth ye spot them, come not near.  
 But if you needs must write, if poverty  
 So pinch, that otherwise you starve and die;  
 On God's name may the *Bull* or *Cockpit* have  
 Your lame blank verse, to keep you from the grave;  
 Or let new *Fortune's*\* younger brethren see,  
 What they can pick from your lean industry.  
 I do not wonder when you offer at  
*Black-Friars*, that you suffer: 'tis the fate  
 Of richer veins; primè judgments, that have far'd  
 The worse, with this deceased man compar'd.  
 So have I seen, when *Cesar* would appear,  
 And on the stage at half-sword parley were  
*Brutus* and *Cassius*, O how the audience  
 Were ravish'd! with what wonder they went thence!  
 When, some new day, they would not brook a line  
 Of tedious, though well labour'd, *Catiline*;  
*Sejanus* too was irksome; they priz'd more  
 "Honest" *Iago*, or the jealous *Moor*.  
 And, though the *Fox* and subtile *Alchymist*,  
 Long intermitted, could not quite be mist,  
 Though these have sham'd all th' ancients, and might  
 raise  
 Their author's merit with a crown of bays,

\* This, I believe, alludes to some of the company of  
*The Fortune* playhouse, who removed to *The Red Bull*.  
 See a prologue on the removing of the late *Fortune* players  
 to *The Bull*. Tateham's *Fancies Theatre*, 1640. MALONE.

Yet these, sometimes, even at a friend's desire  
 Acted, have scarce defray'd the sea-coal fire,  
 And door-keepers: when, let but *Falstaff* come,  
*Hal*, *Poins*, the rest—you scarce shall have a room,  
 All is so pester'd: Let but *Beatrice*  
 And *Benedict* be seen, lo! in a trice  
 The cock-pit, galleries, boxes, all are full,  
 To hear *Malvolio*, that cross-gartered gull.  
 Brief, there is nothing in his wit-fraught book,  
 Whose sound we would not hear, on whose worth  
 look:  
 Like old-coin'd gold, whose lines, in ev'ry page,  
 Shall pass true current to succeeding age.  
 But why do I dead *Shakspeare's* praise recite?  
 Some second *Shakspeare* must of *Shakspeare* write;  
 For me, 'tis needless; since an host of men  
 Will pay, to clap his praise, to save my pen\*.

LEON. DIGGES.

---

*An Elegy on the Death of that famous Writer and Actor,*  
*Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.*

I dare not do thy memory that wrong,  
 Unto our larger griefs to give a tongue.

\* These verses are prefixed to an edition of *Shakspeare's* poems, 12mo. 1640. MALONE.

I'll only sigh in earnest, and let fall  
My solemn tears at thy great funeral.  
For ev'ry eye that rains a show'r for thee,  
Laments thy loss in a sad elegy.  
Nor is it fit each humble Muse should have  
Thy worth his subject, now thou'rt laid in grave.  
No, it's a flight beyond the pitch of those,  
Whose worthless pamphlets are not sense in  
prose.

Let learned *Jonson* sing a dirge for thee,  
And fill our orb with mournful harmony:  
But we need no remembrancer; thy fame  
Shall still accompany thy honour'd name  
To all posterity; and make us be  
Sensible of what we lost, in losing thee:  
Being the age's wonder; whose smooth rhymes  
Did more reform than lash the looser times.  
Nature herself did her ownself admire,  
As oft as thou wert pleased to attire  
Her in her native lustre; and confess,  
Thy dressing was her chiefest comeliness.  
How can we then forget thee, when the age  
Her chiefest tutor, and the widow'd stage  
Her only favourite, in thee, hath lost,  
And Nature's self, what she did brag of most?  
Sleep then, rich soul of numbers! whilst poor we  
Enjoy the profits of thy legacy;  
And think it happiness enough, we have  
So much of thee redeemed from the grave,

As may suffice t' enlighten future times  
 With the bright lustre of thy matchless rhymes\*.

*In Memory of our famous SHAKSPERE.*

Sacred Spirit, whiles thy lyre

Echoed o'er th' Arcadian plains,

Even Apollo did admire,

Orpheus wondered at thy strains:

Plautus sigh'd, Sophocles wept

Tears of anger for to hear,

After they so long had slept,

So bright a genius should appear;

Who wrote his lines with a sun-beam,

More durable than time or fate:—

Others boldly do blaspheme,

Like those that seem to preach, but prate.

Thou wert truly priest elect,

Chosen darling of the Nine,

Such a trophy to erect

By thy wit and skill divine,

That were all their other glories

(Thine excepted) torn away,

By thy admirable stories

Their garments ever shall be gay.

\* These anonymous verses are likewise prefixed to  
 Shakspeare's Poems, 1640. MALONE.

Where thy honour'd bones do lie  
 (As Statius once to Maro's urn),  
 Thither every year will I  
 Slowly tread, and sadly mourn.

S. SHEPPARD\*.

*In remembrance of Master WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.*

ODE.

I.

Beware, delighted poets, when you sing  
 To welcome nature in the early spring,  
 Your num'rous feet not tread  
 The banks of Avon; for each flow'r,  
 As it ne'er knew a sun or show'r,  
 Hangs there the pensive head.

II.

Each tree, whose thick and spreading growth hath  
 made  
 Rather a night beneath the boughs than shade,  
 Unwilling now to grow,  
 Looks like the plume a captain wears  
 Whose rifled *falls* are steep'd i' the tears  
 Which from his last rage flow.

\* This author published a small volume of *Epigrams* in 1651, among which this poem, in memory of Shakspeare, is found. MALONE.



## III.

The piteous river wept itself away,  
 Long since, alas! to such a swift decay,  
 That reach the map, and look  
 If you a river there can spy,  
 And, for a river, your mock'd eye  
 Will find a shallow brook.

WILLIAM DAVENANT.

---

In such an age immortal Shakspeare wrote,  
 By no quaint rules nor hamp'ring criticks taught;  
 With rough majestick force he mov'd the heart,  
 And strength and nature made amends for art.

ROWE's Prologue to *Jane Shore*.

---

Upon SHAKSPERE's MONUMENT at Stratford upon  
 Avon.

Great Homer's birth sev'n rival cities claim,  
 Too mighty such monopoly of fame;  
 Yet not to birth alone did Homer owe  
 His wondrous worth; what Egypt could bestow,  
 With all the schools of Greece and Asia join'd,  
 Enlarg'd the immense expansion of his mind,

Not

Nor yet unrival'd the Mæonian strain;  
 The British Eagle \*, and the Mantuan Swan,  
 Tow'r equal heights. But happier Stratford, thou  
 With uncontested laurels deck thy brow;  
 Thy bard was thine *unschool'd*, and from thee brought  
 More than all Egypt, Greece, or Asia taught;  
 Not Homer's self such matchless laurels won,  
 The Greek has rivals, but thy Shakspeare none.

T. SEWARD.

*Part of SHIRLEY's Prologue to The Sisters.*

And if you leave us too, we cannot thrive,  
 I'll promise neither play nor poet live  
 'Till ye come back; think what you do, you see  
 What audience we have, what company  
 To Shakspeare comes, whose mirth did once beguile  
 Dull hours, and, buskin'd, made even sorrow smile:  
 So lovely were the wounds, that men would say  
 They could endure the bleeding a whole day.

*Extract from MICHAEL DRAYTON's "Elegy to Henry Reynolds, Esq. of Poets and Poesy."*

Shakspeare, thou hadst as smooth a comick vein,  
 Fitting the sock, and in thy natural brain  
 As strong conception, and as clear a rage  
 As any one that traffick'd with the stage,

\* Milton,

*England's*

*England's Mourning Garment, &c. 1603.*

Nor doth the silver-tongued *Melicert*  
 Drop from his honied Muse one sable teare,  
 To mourn her death that graced his desert,  
 And to his laies open'd her royal eare.  
 Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,  
 And sing her *Rape*, done by that *Tarquin*, Death,

---

*A Remembrance of some English Poets at the end of a Collection of Poems, entitled, Lady Pecunia, or the Praise of Money. Caret titulo,*

“ And Shakspeare, thou whose honey-flowing vaine  
 “ (Pleasing the world) thy praises doth containe,  
 “ Whose Venus and whose Lucrece (sweet and chast)  
 “ Thy name in fame's immortal book have plac't.  
 “ Live ever you, at least in fame live ever:  
 “ Well may the body die, but fame die never.”

---

The author of this Poem praises Spenser for his *Fairy Queen*, Daniel for his *Rosamond* and *White Rose and Red*, and Drayton for his *Tragedies* and *Epistles*. These, therefore, must all have been written at a time when Shakspeare had produced only his *Venus* and *Lucrece*.

*To Master W. SHAKSPERE.*

Shakspere, that nimble Mercury thy braine  
Lulls many hundred Argus-eyes asleepe,  
So fit for all thou fashionest thy vaine,  
At th' horse-foot fountaine thou hast drunk full  
deepe.

Vertue's or vice's theme to thee all one is ;  
Who loves chaste life, there's *Lucrece* for a teacher :  
Who list read lust, there's *Venus and Adonis*,  
The modell of a most lascivious leacher.  
Besides, in plaies thy wit winds like Meander,  
When needy new composers borrow more  
Than Terence doth from Plautus or Menander :

But to praise thee aright, I want thy store.  
Then let thine owne works thine owne worth upraise,  
And help t' adorne thee with deserved baies.

Epigram 92, in an ancient collection, entitled *Run  
and a great Cast*, 4to. by Tho. Freeman, 1614.

*An Epitaph on the admirable dramatick Poet, WILLIAM  
SHAKSPERE.*

What needs my Shakspere for his honour'd bones,  
The labour of an age in piled stones ;  
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid  
Under a star-ypointing pyramid ?

Dear

Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,  
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?  
 Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,  
 Hast built thyself a live-long monument:  
 For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,  
 Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart  
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,  
 Those Delphick lines with deep impression took;  
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,  
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;  
 And, so sepulcher'd, in such pomp dost lie,  
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

JOHN MILTON.

---

See, my lov'd Britons, see your Shakspeare rise,  
 An awful ghost, confess'd to human eyes!  
 Unnam'd, methinks, distinguish'd I had been  
 From other shades, by this eternal green,  
 About whose wreaths the vulgar poets strive,  
 And with a touch their wither'd bays revive.  
 Untaught, unpractis'd, in a barbarous age,  
 I found not, but created first the stage;  
 And if I drain'd no Greek or Latin store,  
 'Twas, that my own abundance gave me more:  
 On foreign trade I needed not rely,  
 Like fruitful Britain rich without supply.

DRYDEN's *Prologue to his Alteration  
 of Troilus and Cressida.*

---

Shakspeare,

Shakspeare, who (taught by none) did first impart  
 To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonson art :  
 He, monarch-like, gave those his subjects law,  
 And is that nature which they paint and draw.  
 Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did grow,  
 Whilst Jonson crept, and gather'd all below.  
 This did his love, and this his mirth digest :  
 One imitates him most, the other best.  
 If they have since out-writ all other men,  
 'Tis with the drops that fell from Shakspeare's pen.

DRYDEN's *Prologue to his Alteration of the  
 Tempest.*

---

Our Shakspeare wrote too in an age as blest,  
 The happiest poet of his time, and best ;  
 A gracious prince's favour cheer'd his muse,  
 A constant favour he ne'er fear'd to lose :  
 Therefore he wrote with fancy unconfin'd,  
 And thoughts that were immortal as his mind.

OTWAY's *Prologue to Caius Marius.*

---

Shakspeare, whose genius to itself a law.  
 Could men in every height of nature draw.

ROWE's *Prologue to the Ambitious Stepmother.*

---

Shakspeare (whom you and every play-house bill  
 Style the divine, the matchless, what you will)

For,



For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,  
And grew immortal in his own despoight,

*POPE's Imitation of Horace's Epistle to  
Augustus.*

---

Shakspeare, the genius of our isle, whose mind  
(The universal mirror of mankind)

Express'd all images, enrich'd the stage,  
But sometimes stoop'd to please a barb'rous age.

When his immortal bays began to grow,  
Rude was the language, and the humour low.

He, like the god of day, was always bright;  
But rolling in its course, his orb of light

Was sully'd and obscur'd, tho' soaring high,  
With spots contracted from the nether sky.

But whither is th' advent'rous Muse betray'd?  
Forgive her rashness, venerable shade!

May Spring, with purple flow'rs, perfume thy urn,  
And Avon with his greens thy grave adorn:

Be all thy faults, whatever faults there be,  
Imputed to the times, and not to thee!

*FENTON's Epistle to Southerne, 1711.*

---

*An Inscription for a Monument of SHAKSPEARE.*

O youths and virgins: O declining eld:

O pale misfortune's slaves: O ye whodwell

Unknown with humble quiet; ye who wait

In

In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings:  
 O sons of sport and pleasure: O thou wretch  
 That weep'st for jealous love, or the sore wounds  
 Of conscious guilt, or death's rapacious hand,  
 Which left thee void of hope: O ye who roam  
 In exile; ye who through the embattled field  
 Seek bright renown; or who for nobler palms  
 Contend, the leaders of a public cause;  
 Approach! behold this marble. Know ye not  
 The features? Hath not oft his faithful tongue  
 Told you the fashion of your own estate,  
 The secrets of your bosom? Here then, round  
 His monument with reverence while you stand,  
 Say to each other: "This was Shakspeare's form;  
 "Who walk'd in every path of human life,  
 "Felt every passion; and to all mankind  
 "Doth now, will ever, that experience yield  
 "Which his own genius only could acquire."

AKENSIDE.

---

*From the same Author's Pleasures of Imagination,  
 Book III.*

——— when lightning fires  
 The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,  
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,  
 And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,  
 Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky;  
 Amid the general uproar, while below  
 The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad

From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys  
The elemental war.—

---

—For lofty sense,  
Creative fancy, and inspection keen,  
Through the deep windings of the human heart,  
Is not wild Shakspeare thine and nature's boast?

THOMSON'S *Summer*.

---

When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes  
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose;  
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,  
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new:  
Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,  
And panting Time toil'd after him in vain:  
His pow'rful strokes presiding truth impress'd,  
And unresisted passion storm'd the breast.

*Prologue at the opening of Drury-Lane Theatre in 1747.*

By Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

---

What are the lays of artful Addison,  
Coldly correct, to Shakspeare's warblings wild?  
Whom on the winding Avon's willow'd banks  
Fair Fancy found, and bore the smiling babe  
To a close cavern (still the shepherds shew  
The sacred place, whence with religious awe

They

They hear, returning from the field at eve,  
 Strange whisp'ring of sweet musick thro' the air).  
 Here, as with honey gathered from the rock,  
 She fed the little prattler, and with songs  
 Oft sooth'd his wond'ring ears, with deep delight  
 On her soft lap he sat, and caught the sounds.

*The Enthusiast, or The Lover of Nature, a Poem,*  
 by the Rev. JOSEPH WARTON.

*From the Rev. THOMAS WARTON's Address to the  
 Queen on her Marriage.*

Here, boldly mark'd with every living hue,  
 Nature's unbounded portrait Shakspeare drew:  
 But, chief, the dreadful groupe of human woes  
 The daring artist's tragick pencil chose;  
 Explor'd the pangs that rend the royal breast,  
 Those wounds that lurk beneath the tissued vest.

*Monody, written near Stratford upon Avon.*

Avon, thy rural views, thy pastures wild,  
 The willows that o'erhang thy twilight edge,  
 Their boughs entangling with th' embattled sedge:  
 Thy brink with watery foliage quaintly fring'd,  
 Thy surface with reflected verdure ting'd;  
 Sooth me with many a pensive pleasure mild.  
 But while I muse, that here the Bard Divine,

3 A ij

Whose

Whose sacred dust yon high-arch'd isles enclose,  
 Where the tall windows rise in stately rows,  
 Above th' embowering shade;  
 Here first, at Fancy's fairy-circled shrine,  
 Of daisies pied his infant offering made;  
 Here playful yet, in stripling years unripe,  
 Fram'd of thy reeds a shrill and artless pipe:  
 Sudden thy beauties, Avon, all are fled,  
 As at the waving of some magick wand;  
 An holy trance my charmed spirit wings,  
 And awful shapes of leaders, and of kings,  
 People the busy mead,  
 Like spectres swarming to the wizard's hall;  
 And slowly pace, and point with trembling hand  
 The wounds ill-cover'd by the purple pall.  
 Before me Pity seems to stand  
 A weeping mourner, smote with anguish sore,  
 To see Misfortune rend in frantick mood  
 His robe, with regal woes embroider'd o'er.  
 Pale Terror leads the visionary band,  
 And sternly shakes his sceptre, dropping blood.

*By the Same.*

---

Far from the sun and summer gale,  
 In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,  
 What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,  
 To him the mighty mother did unveil  
 Her awful face: The dauntless child  
 Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smil'd.

This

This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear  
Richly paint the vernal year:

Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!

This can unlock the gates of joy;

Of horror that, and thrilling fears,

Or ope the sacred source of sympathetick tears.

GRAY's *Ode on the Progress of Poesy*.\*

Next Shakspeare sat, irregularly great,

And in his hand a magick rod did hold,

Which visionary beings did create,

And turn the foulest dross to purest gold:

Whatever spirits rove in earth or air,

Or bad, or good, obey his dread command;

To his behests these willingly repair,

Those aw'd by terrors of his magick wand,

The which not all their powers united might withstand.

LLOYD's *Progress of Envy*, 1751.

Oh, where's the bard, who at one view

Could look the whole creation through,

Who travers'd all the human heart,

Without recourse to Grecian art?

\* Of all the many encomiums passed on our great dramatick poet, the most truly poetical one, seems to be contained in the third strophe of Mr. Gray's admirable *Ode on the Progress of Poesy*, particularly in the fine *Prosopoeia* and *Speech of Nature* to him. Dr. J. WARTON.

He



He scorn'd the rules of imitation,  
Of altering, pilfering, and translation;  
Nor painted horror, grief, or rage,  
From models of a former age;  
The bright original he took,  
And tore the leaf from nature's book.  
'Tis Shakspeare—

LLOYD's *Shakspeare*, a Poem.

---

---

In the first seat, in robes of various dyes,  
A noble wildness flashing from his eyes,  
Sat Shakspeare.—In one hand a wand he bore,  
For mighty wonders fam'd in days of yore;  
The other held a globe, which to his will  
Obedient turn'd, and own'd a master's skill:  
Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,  
And look'd through nature at a single view:  
A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,  
And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll;  
Call'd into being scenes unknown before,  
And, passing nature's bounds, was something more.  
CHURCHILL's *Rosciad*.

END OF PROLEGOMENA.



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